









# ITALY AND THE WAR



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# ITALY AND THE WAR

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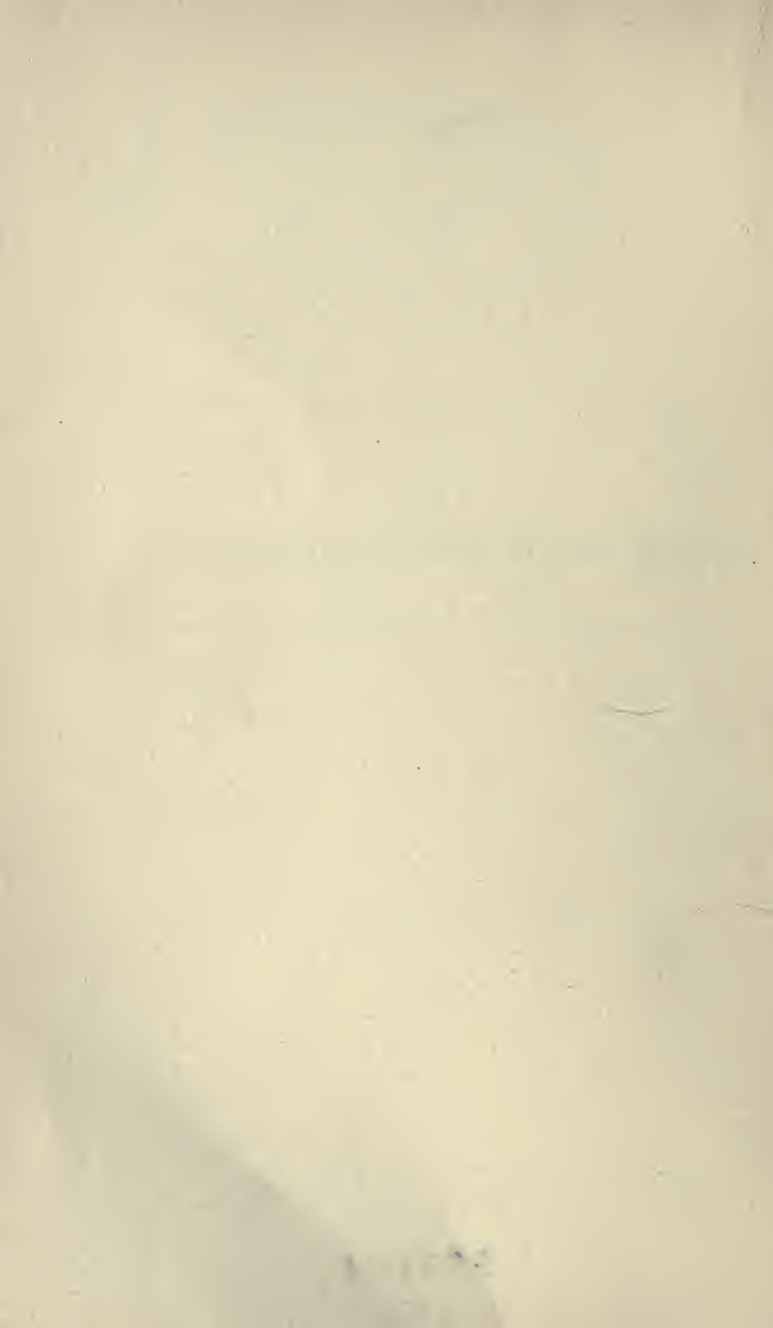
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to visit  
ABINGDON

TO  
MADAME DE COUDEKERQUE-LAMBRECHT  
RESPECTFUL HOMAGE

J. B.

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## P R E F A C E

WAR reveals the nations as they are. It shows where they are strong; it pardons none of their weaknesses. It sheds a harsh light upon their national characteristics, their institutions and governments. The European struggle, by bringing the great Powers into mutual conflict, and by forcing even the smaller nations to take up a position or to choose a side, will at least have served to increase our knowledge of the human species. The present war provides us with the elements of a prodigious survey of experimental psychology and politics. Observations made of this or that country under such circumstances as the present are likely to lead to a much better knowledge of the absolute reality of things.

In the case of Italy I believe we shall never have a better occasion of getting to know her. And at present, to tell the truth, we know very little of her.

The old misunderstandings with France have vanished. Since the rupture of the Triple Alliance the two countries have lived in an atmosphere of unalloyed and unsuspecting sympathy. And the Italians, when they broke the Alliance, were not playing a part. Their action revealed the depths of the Italian heart. In deciding to intervene in

the war, and on the same side as ourselves, they were careful to announce that the national interest of Italy was their guide, and the "sacred egoism" of patriotism their point of departure. This famous phrase was uttered by Signor Salandra, the leader of one of the most broad-minded and honest Governments that Italy has ever known. It is the solid foundation of Italian politics, and the best of guarantees for the harmony of the Allies. Every day that has passed since Italy declared war upon Austria has resulted in a more intimate collaboration with the Powers of the Entente. This result could not have been so certainly foretold if Italy had entered the war merely in obedience to racial affinities, or an enthusiastic but unreliable movement of disinterested altruism.

We are informed that in May 1915 an Italian statesman, who was hostile to intervention, flattered himself that before three months had elapsed Italy would be disillusioned and weary of the war, and would again appeal to him to save her from the consequences of the "false step" which nationalism had induced her to take.

The Italians have already been fighting for a much longer period than three months, and they are neither weary nor disillusioned. Those who, whether at home or abroad, had believed Italy capable of so promptly renouncing her undertaking made a bad miscalculation as to her material and moral resources. The power of resistance which Italy is displaying is a phenomenon which proves better than aught else how the Italian nation has grown and developed during these early years of the twentieth century.

The Italians are suffering under no illusions as to the nature of the war upon which they have voluntarily embarked. Appreciating, judiciously and positively, the general situation, and the forces at work, they will have formed no false estimate of the duration of the struggle, nor of its difficulty. In this connection we were able to collect, on the spot, the clearest evidence of their clairvoyance and resolution. Time, since then, has not stood still; it has proved that the will of Italy, as it asserted itself in Rome during the critical days of May, has become a desperate resolve. It is a foolish prejudice, which must now be abandoned, that the predominant characteristics of the Latins are frivolity and inconstancy. Without speaking of ancient Rome, did not the Italy of the nineteenth century, in her struggles for unity and independence, display a perseverance bordering upon obstinacy? The Italy that realised herself in 1915 was the same Italy.

A broad view of the general situation enables us to estimate the great service which the Italians, merely from the military point of view, are rendering to the cause of the Allies by immobilising, on the Isonzo and the Julian Alps, many hundreds of thousands of Austro-German troops. To recognise "the efficacy of Italian co-operation," as M. Briand has lately done, in a conversation published by a Roman newspaper, is therefore to recognise, to do justice to, an indubitable truth.

But equity calls for more than this. We must never lose sight of the fact that the Italian people entered the war by its own will, imposing that will upon the neutral elements of the nation, elements both powerful and numerous. When-

ever the complaint is made that Italy does not do this or that, simple as the matter may appear from a distance, we must remember that every step forward, every extension of the conflict, implies discussion, a struggle, and resistance to be overcome. In Florence, this very summer,<sup>1</sup> on the wall of the Uffizi we saw "Down with the War!" inscribed in great red letters; they could be read from the farther side of the Piazza della Signoria. And a little farther on, upon another wall, we found other *graffiti* in favour of intervention. Well!—these two tendencies—like those of the Guelfs and the Ghibellines—are active still; but the neutralist movement is in general dominated by the other, which is directed by the best and strongest elements of the country, and has rallied all the *élites*.

The recent declarations of Baron Sonnino, which corroborated those of Signor Orlando, his colleague, and the definite, official adhesion of Italy to the Pact of London—these are events which have occurred since this book was written, and which justify its forecasts. Once having entered the war, it was clear that Italy had to "go through with it"; had to accept the ultimate consequences of the decision which she took when she broke with the Triple Alliance; otherwise her policy would have been merely puerile. And the Italians are no children. They have even proved, by their far-sightedness in Eastern affairs, that they are, in experience and political maturity, far in advance of some of their associates.

We have endeavoured, in this book, to show Italy as the war has revealed her. We have also



sought to present the profounder motives of her intervention; motives which rule her political future. The Italian State is one of the most original and one of the most vigorous elements of modern Europe, and one of the richest in future promise. The war came at one of the most favourable moments of its growth and evolution. Italy was able to seize upon this moment, and to-morrow, we believe, she will count in the world for more than she counted yesterday.

This is a fact which we ought to realise; and also, how it came about. This book expresses our admiration for the progress of Italy, and for the realism of her politics. We foresee for her in the future successes at least equal to those she has won in the past. Whosoever may feel inclined to take umbrage for this reason will do better to learn, by this example, something of the conditions under which a State may uplift itself, and a people increase its stature.

*December 1915.*



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#### ERRATA

- p. 54, 5th line from bottom, for *uncles* read *cousins*.  
p. 69, 11th line, for *conservator* read *conservative*.  
p. 75, 3rd line from bottom, p. 76, 1st line, for *Trivulce* read *Trivulzio*.  
p. 105, 7th line from bottom, for *On leaving Spain* read *On leaving  
for Spain*.

independence of Italy, Massimo d'Azeglio, wrote from Turin to his French friends : " You should see how your soldiers are received ! Yesterday two squadrons of lancers went by beneath my windows, in the midst of a crowd which could no longer find means of expressing its delight, and nearly all the officers were wearing great bunches of flowers, which the ladies had thrown them from the balconies. It is the honeymoon at its full, and I hope it will be a *honey-comet* (excuse

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# ITALY AND THE WAR

## CHAPTER I

### ITALIAN OPINIONS AND INTENTIONS

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IN the month of May 1859, shortly before the battles of Magenta and Solferino, an Italian patriot, one of those who had done most for the independence of Italy, Massimo d'Azeglio, wrote from Turin to his French friends: "You should see how your soldiers are received! Yesterday two squadrons of lancers went by beneath my windows, in the midst of a crowd which could no longer find means of expressing its delight, and nearly all the officers were wearing great bunches of flowers, which the ladies had thrown them from the balconies. It is the honeymoon at its full, and I hope it will be a *honey-comet* (excuse

the neologism !), and, what is more, one of those that return every hundred years ! ”

This curious expression erred only on the side of moderation and extreme prudence. Not in a century, as Azeglio thought, but in less than sixty years, will the “comet” of Franco-Italian friendship have accomplished its revolution.

During the journey from Paris to Milan we mused for a long time on this species of prophecy. How favourable to meditation, by the way, is this journey ! Not recking that we should, by passing through Switzerland, double the formalities of the passport and the customs inspection, particularly strict and minute in these troublous times, we had taken the “short-cut” by way of Frasnè-Vallerbe, a work of peace which had just been inaugurated in the midst of war. The “short-cut” was destined to lengthen our voyage to a remarkable degree, but we had no reason to regret this. On leaving a France in arms, a France in which the enemy was still encamped, all of whose male population was with the colours, down to the reservists of the old territorial classes, with grey hairs and bushy beards, who were patiently guarding the railway-track—on leaving this France, a France in campaigning kit and all the accoutrements of war, what did we find ? A Switzerland which, in the Latin portion, was thrilled by the same passions and the same hopes as we ourselves, and which, in her Germanic portion, was equally ready to defend her frontiers, determined that she would not suffer the fate of Belgium ; whose mountaineers had been in arms for nearly a year, in order to safeguard their independence. And when, having



crossed the Simplon, we entered Italy, our eyes again encountered the same military spectacle, but here something was added: the activity, the stir, and the lively bustle of the first weeks of warfare, which we had witnessed in France at the opening of hostilities.

Lastly, whether in France, in Switzerland, or in Italy, on the faces of these mobilised citizens, men confronted by their harsh military duty, we beheld no resignation, but resolute glances and entire acceptance. What a vision it was!—fleeting, to be sure, and incomplete, yet suggestive and exact as a photographic document—this vision of the Europe of 1915, and of the tasks, heavy and fearful, which the existence of a mighty Germany has imposed upon all the European peoples!

While the train was rolling across the plain of Lombardy, without a stop, with a clockwork punctuality of which the Italians might well be proud in the midst of such circumstances; while we were drawing near to the historic sites of Magenta and Solferino, we listened to the conversation of our fellow-travellers, who were all in favour of Italian intervention, approving warmly of the decision of King Victor-Emmanuel and Signor Salandra. And then there recurred to our mind a striking impression which had remained with us from the great decisive days of the international crisis of 1914, from which the war emerged. Living, in Paris, near the Italian Embassy, we had seen, at the end of July, the Rue de Grenelle filled with Italians resident in the city, who had come some to ask for information, some to obtain certificates, some to apply

for passports. On the faces of these poor folk might be read the same uneasiness, the same anguish. They were going to war, that was certain. Germany and Austria were revealing their design, pursuing their ideal of aggression. And was not Italy their ally and associate? Was there not the Triple Alliance? . . . What? They would have to fight against France—friendly, hospitable France? The thought made for gloomy faces. One felt that their hearts rebelled against it. But no later than the 3rd of August, interpreting and appeasing the Italian conscience, the Government of Victor-Emmanuel III declared its full and entire neutrality, leaving to Germany and Austria the responsibility for their provocative attitude. And then you might have seen the Italians in Paris lifting their heads once more; you might have seen them displaying, with pride and gladness, on their sleeves, in their buttonholes, on their hats, the Red, White, and Green which should never be the foe of the Blue, White, and Red.

Those Italian artillerymen were actuated by the same feeling who, at that very moment, on the Alpine frontier, were changing the direction of their guns, no longer willing that their mouths should be turned toward France: as a token that the French might be at ease, might devote themselves wholly, without anxiety as to their south-eastern frontier, to repulsing the invader. And this attitude, loyally assumed and faithfully observed by Italy from the first day of the conflict, from the declaration of hostilities—was it not the attitude of Italy even before this date? Did it not set her feet upon the path which was



to lead her to intervene on the side of France ? The fortunate event, the favourable issue, occurred at the due moment, when it was needed, when it could supervene with the most complete effect. It was, above all, a great happiness for those who, being friends and admirers of intellectual, artistic, and literary Italy, had so long dreaded to see the scandal of Italy in arms against France, in conformity with the treacherous programme of Bismarck. When, in the summer of 1915, we found an Italy associated with our cause and our arms, we were conscious of one of the keenest pleasures we have experienced since this war began. What a satisfaction, what a consolation, to reflect that the blood of the French heroes which was shed of old for the liberation of Italy was shed no less for France ; that the sacrifice was not in vain, since it was in part responsible for the advent of this hour ; since by its virtue the old alliance, which men feared to see fall into oblivion, had been renewed.

Of course—and we must not forget this—we are no longer in the year 1859. We are no longer in the times when Swinburne called Italy “ the care of the world.” We are no longer in the times when Lamartine had but lately declared : “ To liberate Italy would be enough to make a people glorious.” These are no longer the times when Napoleon III cast the sword of France in the European balance—in favour of United Italy ; and the collaboration of to-day bears only a distant resemblance to the old collaboration between the Second Empire and Piedmont. Situations, events, states of mind—these no longer coincide, point by point. The

comet predicted by Massimo d'Azeglio is gleaming above a world transformed—a world over which time has passed. Still, we hasten to admit that this comet, on its return, must have recognised many things—many relics of other times, which all those for whom history speaks a living tongue will have saluted, with overflowing hearts, upon setting foot on Italian soil in the midst of these great events.

. . . . .

It would be a great error to represent the Italy of 1915, an Italy enlarged and fortified, the greater Italy, a mighty entity, which has freely formed its decision in the face of the European conflict, as having the countenance and the features of the Italy of the nineteenth century, the Italy which had yet to conquer her independence, to overcome the obstacles which opposed her existence as a nation. Then Italy was in the outer darkness.

Was she capable of life? Men thought it so doubtful that Metternich, her deadliest enemy, was able to flatter himself that he had for all time defined her as a "geographical expression."

But we must not forget this: that something, and something strong and enduring, has survived from the heroic age, from that period of suffering from which the political rebirth was dated, the resurrection—*Risorgimento*—of the Italian people; it is the moral element, the idealism and the poetry of that period. We were impelled one day in Milan to remark before a few hearers who willingly forgave the play of words: "It seems that we are here witnessing the *risorgimento del Risorgimento*." For there was indeed, in the

Italy of 1915, a real resurrection of those feelings by virtue of which the Italy of the nineteenth century arose from her tomb. To realise what was passing, during the great European crisis, in the minds of Italian citizens, we must obtain an accurate idea of the various elements which came into play. Among these elements, historical tradition and the poetical inspiration of the *Risorgimento* were not the least, and if we were to ignore these we should form an erroneous estimate as to the general causes of the war, and also as to the mental state and mental tendencies of the Italian people.

Rare indeed in France, save perhaps among a few of the elect, the historical sense is in Italy an inspiring motive. And we must not suppose that this is true of Lombardy only, and Venetia, where the meaning of oppression has obviously remained more vivid and is still a thing of yesterday. More than one Milanese was born under foreign rule. More than one heard the cry: "Away with the Barbarians!" long before the war of 1914 had spontaneously recalled to life, in Belgium, in France, and all over Europe, the accusation of barbarism brought against the Germans. In Milan the struggle for independence is evoked at every step, almost by every stone; the very names of the streets (as that of the Via Mac-Mahon) recall the past. More than one Milanese has asked me: "How could I fail to be in favour of intervention, when my father fought beside your soldiers in 1859?"

Yes; memory may be more potent here than elsewhere, but it has never, in Italy, been absent from the minds of any: Signor Salandra, for

example (one cannot cite a better), is neither Lombard nor Venetian; he hails from Bari, in Apulia. All, in short, have been affected by historical suggestion. It has even seemed as though there were those among the adversaries of intervention themselves who could not refrain from recalling the years of Piedmont's growth and conflict, years full of bitterness and perplexity. And these had feared—quite wrongly—lest war with Germany and Austria should compromise the magnificent results—which half a century ago had seemed too much to hope for to Italians of little faith—which the Italy of our days has achieved.

The Italian has a long memory. He knows his history. His own national history is to him a sacred thing, and he continually derives from it motives of action. Thus it was that the enthusiasm with which Italy welcomed the expedition to Tripoli went hand in hand with the festivals which celebrated the jubilee of the *Risorgimento*. Italy owes her conquest of Tripoli to the evocation of memories which exalt the Italian mind. Let us carefully remember this Italian characteristic: it will explain more than one phenomenon of political life which is puzzling at the first encounter. As for us, we have always regarded those peoples which do not attempt to conceal their frivolity and ignorance by an affected disdain of the past as worthy of admiration, and even of envy.

Like the French, the Italians willingly discuss, with entire candour and freedom, those events which have, in the course of years, marked the relations between French and Italy. They do



not hesitate—and in this they are right—to evoke the bad moments as well as the good ; they hold that silence, in this connection, conciliates no one, but merely nourishes ill-feeling. It is significant that they do not hesitate to go back beyond the incidents of the *Carthage* and the *Manouba*, and the affair of Aigues-Mortes. One day, as I was standing before the statue of Napoleon III which may be seen in the courtyard of the palace of the ancient Senate in Milan, a prominent citizen of the Lombard capital made the following curious remark : “ Napoleon III. . . . We shall always be grateful to him for Solferino. But we have not forgiven him for Villafranca.” Well ! If one wishes to avoid misunderstandings, when conversing with Italians, if one wishes one’s conversation to be profitable, one must always remember that Solferino, no less than Villafranca, is always present to the lucid Italian mind. They are events of more than fifty years ago. But that matters little. Solferino remains, for the Italians, the name of the victory which made every hope possible ; Villafranca stands for the sudden check and the bitter disappointment. And they are still keenly sensible of these contradictory impressions, as the contemporaries of these events were conscious of them. They are still thrilled by the passions of their ancestors.

This is one of the essential characteristics of the Italian mind, of the Italian sensibility, which are attentive to the voice of history. The Germans, who know the Italians, have not failed to cultivate this peculiarity. We have been told that during the weeks when Prince von

Bülow was desperately negotiating and intriguing in Rome, German agents, Wilhelm II's commercial travellers, were giving lectures on modern history to the villagers in the taverns (in the *osterie* of Tuscany more especially), hoping to prove to them that it was in the interest of Italy to range herself on the Austro-German side. The attempt, however, was made in vain; it was swamped, with all the rest, by the great flood of feeling which was sweeping across Italy. But for some little time, in the market-places of the Tuscan villages, you might have heard the rustics discussing Italian history, and, with the erudition of a German textbook, supporting the cause of the Ghibellines!

. . . . .

Italy went to war—to “her” war, as she said—with deliberate significance and a just pride; animated by a passion and enthusiasm several of whose elements will be found lacking in the feelings which determined the course of the other nations which are to-day united against the Central Empires. It is true, in particular, that a writer played an important part in determining the decision of Italy: Gabriele d’Annunzio continued the incantations of all the great Italian poets by whom the lyric moments of last May were brought to completion, and the war was acclaimed by the Roman people.

It must be remembered that in this land of noble speech and rhythm, where the music of verse is appreciated as highly as in the country of the *Félibres*, all the poetry of the nineteenth century, and more particularly the noblest and the most beautiful, has been, in spirit, Nationalist.

The Italians are fortunate in that their greatest poets have always expressed the aspirations of their country. Everywhere in Italy since the outbreak of the war a collection of patriotic verse has been offered for sale; an anthology, printed on inferior paper; and in this popular anthology figure the noblest and proudest names of the Italian Parnassus. Happy country, where the difficult and scholarly verse of a Leopardi or a Carducci is sold in the street for a halfpenny, and is carried in the soldier's knapsack! It should be remembered that the *Saluto italico* of Carducci has since the end of May been recited almost nightly in the theatres of the populace, if we are to realise the nature and the quality of the movement which has brought Italy into the conflict.

Stendhal somewhere remarks that in Italy "the vulgar are the few." The remark is still true, and I remember that a similar observation was made years ago by General de Charette. For although he had fought in the ranks of the Papal Army, and against the unity of Italy, he adored the Italian spirit, and he always remembered with pride that he was once a pupil in the Royal Military Academy of Turin. I think I may venture to say that General de Charette had never read Stendhal, although his memoirs often remind one of the anecdotes in the *Chartreuse de Parme*. But this similarity of opinion, as regards the tendency of the Italian mind to adhere to what is high and noble, coming from men so different as Henri Beyle and the leader of the Papal Zouaves, has always struck me as worthy of attention.

It is very flattering to the nature and the quality of the Italian mind, for Stendhal and Charette, each in his own way, were good judges of men. They would both have recognised Italy, and one of the dominant faculties of the Italian character, in the events of last year. They would have said that the inspiration of the war of 1915, propagated by the lyre, was such as it should have been in a country whose greatest patriotic society bears the name of Dante Alighieri.

However, we must not suppose that the foregoing remarks have exhausted the analysis of the sentiments of the Italian nation. One there was above all—and again, of the moral order—which was to the fore in everything and was all-decisive. This was the sentiment of the nation's honour, so potent in modern Italy, who has by no means forgotten the rule of the *Tedesco*, which has made her extremely susceptible on this point. Now this sense of honour was seriously exacerbated by the intrigues of Prince von Bülow, and was even more seriously offended by the connivance of certain Parliamentarians with the foreigner. Whoso fails to realise this fact will fail to understand the force of the current which was sweeping Italy onward in the month of May 1915. This, however, is a subject of such importance, involving so many diverse considerations, that we shall have to deal with it at leisure and in a special chapter.

But the hints we have just given will perhaps be sufficient to demonstrate the necessary falsity of any one-sided explanation of the new *Risorgimento* and the rupture between Italy and her ancient Allies. Especially should we reject, as



unduly simplified and suspiciously complete, the explanation that all was due to Freemasonry and the traditions of the democratic and revolutionary spirit. Doubtless these forces do exist, these traditions do survive, and play their part in the public life of modern Italy. But they are far from being the only forces at work therein, to the exclusion of all other ideas, as we shall have occasion to show farther on.

Yet it is upon this explanation that the German newspapers have seized. This is the explanation to which they have given currency; which they loudly proclaim, with hypocritical reprobation. Atheistical Italy! Italy the jailer of the Papacy! As though before 1914 Wilhelm II had ever dreamed of being offended with Italy! Yet to-day, in order to win the sympathies of the Catholics for his cause, he is posing as the champion of the Church and the protector of the Holy See. But the German Press excels in blowing hot and cold, and does not even trouble to find out whether neutrals are conscious of its contradictions when it represents Germany now as the champion of Liberalism against the Russian autocracy and now as the champion of law and order against the French democracy. Moreover, the Prussia of the *Kulturkampf*, which to-day affects to be so zealous for the Papacy and the Church, in 1866 befriended young Italy against Austria, although Italy was really animated by a spirit of revolution! Imperial Germany, again, has for thirty-two years been the ally of the Italian monarchy, yet has never made any remark as to its domestic politics, even when the question of religion was concerned. In

France, as abroad, if one followed the Germanic Press along such a path as this, one would be submitting to capture by the clumsiest of Teutonic manœuvres.

We may suppose—may we not?—that the Italians know themselves. Now the Conservatives and the Moderates, in Italy, absolutely refuse to admit that the movement in favour of intervention can be explained by the influence of Freemasonry, and by that alone. In Lombardy notably the Catholics are demanding their share in the national war, and their attitude and their actions speak for them. Consider, for example, the magnificent campaign of the *Corriere della Sera*, which has become the most widely read newspaper in Northern Italy, and which has been fully as eager and resolute in its appeal for intervention as any of its Radical contemporaries. Consider too the welcome which the deputy Meda, who was then a “neutralist,” received, on a certain day, from his friends and his Catholic electors. Consider, lastly, the enthusiastic participation of the Lombard aristocracy in the war. Not that the aristocracy of the other Italian provinces bore itself otherwise; not that any distinction can be made. But in Lombardy it was truly a whole chivalry that rose. Some friends were anxious to provide me with a list of names. The whole of Milan society was on this list; if there were exceptions they were extremely few, and only necessity was responsible for them. Officers or volunteers, there is not one good Lombard family that has not its representatives in the armies. Here are the Princes of Castelbarco-Albani, the Conti di Castelbarco-

Visconti, Prince Gonzaga di Venevato, the Duca di Visconti and his brothers, the Conti Visconti di Modrone, the Duca Scotti and his brothers, the Conti Gallarati Scotti, Prince Trivulzio, the Conti Cornaggia, the Conte Carena, the Conte Taverna, the Conte Borromeo-Aresi, who owns the beautiful palace, unique upon the face of the earth, of the Borromean Isles in Lago Maggiore; the Conti Borromeo d'Adda, the Conti Paravicini, the Conte Cicogna, the Grippi, the Marchesi Clerici and Crivelli, the Marchesi Corti and his sons, the Conte di Negroni and his sons, the families of the Conti Belgiojoso, who bear a name illustrious in the history of the *rinascimento*; the Conti Dal Verme, the Calvi, the Brivii, the Durini . . . and others and others and again others; names which form, as it were, the armorial of a Crusade.

And those who showed me these eloquent lists added these words:

“There are families here which used to be considered Austrophile. They are with the armies, like the rest. Even in 1859 there was not such a blaze, nor such unity, in our Lombardy!”

This is a fact to be remembered. It indicates the moral elevation of Italy at war. It gives the keynote of this mighty enterprise, so quick with consequences to come, upon which the Italian people has voluntarily embarked. But, as the Milanese themselves would be the first to admit, it was in Rome that all was decided. It was in Rome that the movement in favour of intervention was most effective. It was in Rome that opinion had to be consulted, during those

historic days which gave birth to the Italian war.

The first time I met Gabriele d'Annunzio—it was, as he himself has since reminded me, at the Villa Borghese, under the burning Roman sun—I remarked to the poet, after recalling those wonderful evenings in May, when the Roman people, speaking with his voice, had demanded and acclaimed the war :

“In 1848 you would have been Lamartine. But, more fortunate than he, there was no need for you to cause a revolution.”

It is important that the reader should realise the peculiar characteristics of the popular and national movement which determined the intervention of Italy. In France, on the whole, these events were not very clearly understood. The internal convulsion which Italy underwent before taking part in the European war has remained obscure. Farther on we shall sketch the history of this crisis, and it will be seen that it constitutes one of the most striking phenomena of the political life of contemporary Europe.

Among the States at present at war in Europe, some have obeyed an idea of aggression ; others, in the face of this attack, have assumed an attitude of conservation and self-defence ; Italy has taken part in the conflict from motives peculiar to herself. She has done so voluntarily, in perfect liberty, although offered compensation if she would remain a neutral. Something more powerful than love of peace, more persuasive than the sense of immediate gains and advantages, to be enjoyed without effort, impelled the Italian people to intervene. It was the feeling that a



solemn hour was striking for all the nations, and that the nation which should allow this historic moment to pass without proving the might of its arms would suffer an irreparable diminishment. Moreover, a sort of vital instinct warned Italy that these great European events were occurring at the moment when she herself was entering upon a period of growth and development, a new phase of her history, after surmounting the difficult years of her unification. From every point of view the year 1915 marked a great date in the development of Italian nationality, the beginning of what has sometimes been called the "Fourth Italy." And this the people of Italy felt; this they understood. Few peoples are better endowed than the Italians in the matter of the spontaneous realisation of the great necessities of politics. The demonstrations of May 1915 expressed the profound intuition of the Italian people. According to the decision which it was about to take, a door leading to the future was about to open or to close.

It would be a great mistake to attribute the war merely to the passion of "Irredentism." No doubt the Italian nationalist wants the Trentino and Trieste. He wants them badly. I have seen, wearing the Italian uniform, many sons of the *terre irredente*—the unredeemed lands—who had just fled from Austria to fight her; and the other day forty-two of them begged permission to make an assault upon an enemy position, an assault from which not one returned. It is always curiously potent, this feeling of nostalgia which Italy cherishes for the *terre irredente*, the feeling to which Giosué Carducci

gave the wings of poetry in his famous *Saluto Italico* :

“ ‘When ? ’ the old men sadly repeat to themselves, who one day, when their hair was black, bade thee, Trentino, farewell.

“ ‘When ? ’ say the young men, thrilling with passion, who yesterday, from San Giusto, still beheld the blue-green Adriatic sparkling.”

This “when ? ” receives its reply at length, and the prayer of so many Italian patriots, who have vanished, like Carducci, without having seen the deliverance of their brothers, is about to be granted. But this is only a portion of the great programme which Italy has set herself, and which, she is conscious, responds to her increased energies, her development, and the progress of all kinds which she has of late years realised. If Italy desired the war for the sake of Trieste and the Trentino, it was not for their sakes only. She desired even more to solve the problem of the Adriatic, for every one in the Peninsula knows that Italy has the worse share of the shores of that sea, and that Austria-Hungary, from her safe Dalmatian harbours and her islands, with their formidable winding channels, continually threatens and overlooks her.

But the problem of the Adriatic, the “most bitter Adriatic,” as Gabriele d’Annunzio calls it—bitter indeed to the Italian heart—the problem of the Adriatic does not explain everything, any more than the passion of irredentism.

. . . . .

Since the guns have been thundering on the

Isonzo and the Julian Alps—since the fourth war against Austria has commenced—very many officers and soldiers from all parts and provinces of the Peninsula have already fallen. The epitaph preferred by the families of these heroes—the ordinary formula of the announcement in the press or by letter—is extremely significant: “Died fighting for the greater destinies of Italy—*per i maggiori destini d’Italia.*” Thus the memory of the soldiers who have fallen on the field of honour is associated with the idea of the nation’s future. And this ideal, for which they gave their lives, was indeed the great incentive, the active, determining motive, which was responsible for Italy’s decision.

Not because of Trieste and the Trentino, nor the Adriatic problem, but in view of a more general interest, which none the less embraces these, did Italy desire “her” war. She wanted a war of her own, a personal war, a national war, which is, however, the same war as that the Allies are fighting, because she felt in every fibre, felt in her vital centres, that the victory of Austria-Hungary would for her be the signal for her downfall and a fresh servitude. The Italian people understood with extraordinary lucidity that the Triple Alliance had never been anything more, either to Italy or to her Germanic associates, than a provisional combination, which involved no loyalty on the part of her partners of Vienna and Berlin; something after the fashion of a solution of the problem of the wolf, the goat, and the cabbage, a solution according to which the Prussian wolf proposed to allow the Austrian goat, when occasion should present itself, to

fatten herself upon the Italian cabbage, in order that the wolf might finally devour her with greater satisfaction. The Italians felt no scruples as to denouncing a convention dictated by the purest opportunism. They refused to allow themselves to be seduced by the supreme temptations of Prince von Bülow, who offered them not merely meagre and eventual compensations at the expense of Austria, but also held out Tunisia, Malta, and Egypt even as their easy prey. The greatest proof that the Italian people has ever given of its political good sense, which is extremely shrewd, is that it refused this deal; that it preferred to owe whatever it might take to its own efforts; to conquest; that it preferred to assert its right to "greater destinies," to a greater place in the world, by giving proof of its strength and revealing the colour of its blood.

And here, precisely here, resided the misunderstanding which broke out into public demonstrations in the May of 1915; a misunderstanding between two generations, between two states of mind. The violence of the "interventionists" against Signor Giolitti and the "neutralists" was extreme. If we regard matters carefully, with the impartiality of history, we shall no doubt recognise that Signor Giolitti, in supporting the thesis of the *parecchio*, of compensation, of the equivalent—of "something," in short, which Italy could and should acquire without sacrifice—was actuated by another conception, another instinct than those which were actuating the Italian people. I was told that Signor Giolitti, so long the Grand Master of the



administrative life of Italy, as he had also been its Parliamentary dictator, was never in his life so amazed as when he saw the staff of the Ministries, almost wholly appointed by himself, demonstrating in favour of war—that is, in opposition to his own influence. The conflict, accordingly, was truly serious, because it was a conflict between two ideas, two methods; because it revealed the fact that Signor Giolitti and his supporters were below the level of the people's will to live, were behind the passing hour. Their ideas, though economic and prudent, were in violent contrast to the need of development experienced by the nation. They assuredly esteemed themselves the best and wisest and most realistic of the Italians. And a great cry arose from the people, declaring that their prudence was senseless, for it sought to restrain one of those national impulses toward wider destinies which may be compared to an irresistible vocation in the individual.

Those days of May were more fraught with future consequences than any through which Italy had passed since the fiery period of her enfranchisement. Their history is as yet little known. Jean Carrère, in his lucid letters to the Paris *Temps*, was almost alone in giving, day by day, a precise account of the events of which Rome was the theatre. We shall now endeavour to tell the story of these days, or at least to give an outline of them, for they constitute one of the most striking episodes connected with the great European war.

Now here is a point which it is important to elucidate without delay.

These unforgettable days in Rome, which the superficial spectator would have been tempted to describe as days of rioting, were above all an appeal to the King. It was to the successor of the creators of Italian unity that the people turned. They demanded that he should speak with the voice of the nation; a decisive voice against which there should be no appeal, before which the last opposition would give way. . . . And the King spoke, recalling Salandra to power, declaring war upon the 24th of May: a great day, in the records of Italy and the House of Savoy, both of which set forth, together and once again, toward an ampler future.

On this point all actors and all observers are unanimous: it was no revolutionary or Carbonarist movement of the old style which pushed Italy into the war. The democratic elements, by a mighty synthesis, were united, in the national movement, with the remaining elements of the nation. But the national character carried all before it; the word of the king dominated everything. Even from the Trastevere, traditionally anticlerical, not a word or a stone was aimed at the Vatican; a phenomenon which impressed all observers. Later on Barzilaï, a republican, rallied to the monarchy. This is the truth about the movement of May 1915, which marked a renewal of Italy's historic patriotism, a renewal implying the subordination of the old revolutionary element to the national spirit.

This is why I was able to remark to Gabriele d'Annunzio, who did not contradict me, that in being the poet of these days of May he was happier than Lamartine, for he caused no revolu-

tion. But a rapid glance at the most recent period of Italian history will suffice to convince us that a national movement like that of May 1915 could not be in the slightest danger of following a revolutionary path.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ADAPTATIONS OF THE HOUSE OF SAVOY

The Revolution in the Italian past—A saying of George Sand's—A dynasty of adapters and realisers—The advice of Joseph de Maistre—The spiritual drama of Carlo Alberto—The rallying of the patriotic Democrats—The evolution of a subversive monarchy—The Italian Iphigenia—Neither reaction nor revolution—After unification, pacification and union.

DURING the winter of 1915 a Frenchman toured through the cities of Northern Italy, where he delivered eloquent lectures in honour of the Allies. And as he neglected no argument which might be capable of determining the intervention of Italy on the side of the French Republic, the orator evoked the memories of the past, the solidarity of the revolutionary movements of the nineteenth century in France and Italy, and the ancient fraternity existing between the French democracy and the Italian. Now it was noticed that his public—Piedmontese and Lombard—was, as a general thing, by no means sensible to such appeals, responding but poorly to the fiery conviction with which they were delivered. Finally our compatriot—an open-minded and scholarly speaker on whom the lesson cannot have been wasted—was enlightened as to the cause of his perplexity. By the aid of a

familiar and proverbial expression one of his auditors made him understand the reason why certain passages of his lectures did not receive the response he had looked for.

"Take care!" someone told him; "to speak of revolution in Italy is rather like speaking of the cord in the house of a man who has been hanged!"

Thoroughly to understand contemporary Italy, and to avoid misconceptions as to the Italy of to-morrow, we must, in short, realise the nature of the modern Italian State, its origins, the complexity of the elements and ideas which presided over its formation, and lastly, the remarkable evolution which it has accomplished in the course of half a century's existence.

By way of introduction to a little book of Mazzini's, *Republic or Royalty in Italy*, one of the Gospels of the Italian *Risorgimento*, George Sand, at the height of her democratic fervour (it was in 1880) wrote the following lines. It is curious indeed to read them at the present moment.

"Italy," she said, "will never succeed in winning her freedom by means of princes. She must rally round the republican principle, which is her safety-anchor; for independently of the prodigies of courage and enthusiasm which only a new faith can engender, this nation cannot lag behind that European movement which is inevitably drawing the democracy toward the Republic."

George Sand was expressing a belief which was then general; it was the profoundest tenet



of the men of 1848, her friends and confidants. Did not Michelet, about this time, prophesy that when German unity and Italian unity were an accomplished fact, Europe would at last enjoy peace and fraternity, based upon a system of universal democracy? It was then hoped that the "unitarian" movement in Germany and Italy was the precursor of a great European Republic. It was argued that once these national aspirations were satisfied, once a few thrones were overturned, once a few great peoples had united according to their affinities and aspirations, the constitution of the United States of Europe would be only a matter of a few years. In this respect Michelet and George Sand, with almost all their contemporaries, were gravely mistaken. It was not the German Liberals of the Frankfort Parliament who created German unity; it was Bismarck, Moltke, and the Hohenzollerns. United Italy was the work not of republicans like Manin or Mazzini, but of Cavour and the princes of the House of Savoy. We must admit, however, that in the days of George Sand and Michelet it was pardonable to be thus mistaken; the delusion was to a certain extent excusable.

Who were, in truth, in Italy as in Germany, the first partisans of national unity? Liberals, Democrats, Jacobins even, who represented the traditions of the French Revolution; who were inspired by the spirit of the Declaration of the Rights of Man; who proposed, as did the French Jacobins and Liberals, the abolition of the treaties of 1815. The Revolution of 1848—a revolution not only French, like that of 1789, but European rather—marked an awakening of the nationalities,

a considerable step forward. In Italy the national and unifying movement was all the more nearly confounded with the democratic movement in that there was a question of liberating Italian soil from the sovereignty of the Holy See and the rule of Austria—that is, from the two Powers which in the highest degree represented absolutism and reaction.

Now in Piedmont there reigned a very ancient dynasty, one of the oldest sovereign families in Europe, whose origins were lost in the night of the legendary period, before even Hubert of the White Hands, one of the founders of the house. In the course of a very long history, full of vicissitudes, through which they succeeded in maintaining their independence amid powerful neighbours, the Dukes of Savoy had finally transferred the seat of their government from Chambéry to Turin: a first step on the road to Florence, and thence to Rome. The first heads of the house had their sepulchre in the little Savoyard abbey of Hautecombe. Their heirs rest in the Roman Pantheon. Who would have prophesied this even a hundred years ago?

Their capacity for adapting themselves to novel conditions of political existence, for enduring, and even increasing, amid the vicissitudes of the ages, had always been remarkable. This aptitude was in the nineteenth century to find an extraordinary opportunity of fulfilment. The tendency of the Dukes of Savoy to become Italianised had been for some time perceptible. But their monarchy was none the less a traditional monarchy, exactly like that of the Bourbons of France or that of the Habsburgs of Austria.



Nevertheless it was this ancient dynasty which, with the audacity of youth, was to plunge itself into the *Risorgimento*, to place itself at the head of the Italian nationalist movement, a movement whose origin was democratic and revolutionary, while its aspirations were republican.

It may readily be imagined that such a dynasty, to have achieved such a position, must have undertaken great responsibilities and overcome violent repulsions. A cross figures on the coat-of-arms of the House ; and this cross, the Cross of Savoy, was one day raised against the Papacy, thus fulfilling the passage—extremely obscure, one must admit—in the famous prophecy of St. Malachi—*crux de cruce*—which refers to the pontificate of Pius IX. To tread such a path, bordered by so many precipices, the House of Savoy was forced to display a great deal of suppleness and a sure eye for realities. Intuition of the future was required of it. From generation to generation it has displayed these gifts. One recalls, upon reading its history, that French minister who one day defined both himself and his policy by a famous phrase, to the effect that he was “a man of realisations.” One might equally well say of the House of Savoy that it has been a dynasty of realisers.

Towards the middle of the nineteenth century these princes felt that their destinies were either about to close for ever, or, on the contrary, to open upon an ampler phase. They understood that their house, reigning over Piedmont, and affected, through Piedmont, by all that might happen in Italy, might well be overpowered and overthrown by the Italian nationalist movement

—unless it were to place itself at the head of that movement. On the other hand, although the nationalist movement was powerful as a state of mind, its resources were small. Reduced to itself, led by a few republican agitators, it was in danger of meeting with a check unless it could find some organised force which would lend it support. This force was to be Piedmont and its princes. Thus the same hope, the same fear, and the same calculation were about to ally these two differing elements—kings by Divine right and democrats, traditional sovereigns and red-shirted insurgents, who had come to an agreement upon a formula of national interest and Italian interest.

Modern Italy was to be born of this marriage—the marriage of a royal family and the Revolution—and for a long time she was to be conscious of this conflicting heredity. For a long time men asked themselves which of the two partners would devour the other. To-day the question puzzles no one; the monarchical element has finally prevailed, by effecting a masterly synthesis, a skilful conciliation. The princes of the House of Savoy enjoyed at the critical moment the immense advantage, the immense superiority, of doubting neither themselves nor their future. At a time when the majority of kings no longer had much faith in monarchy, they had full confidence in it. Metternich said pityingly of those sovereigns who allowed themselves to be dethroned without resistance, after standing in a spirit of fatalism before the barricades: “I am so accustomed to find kings regarding themselves as an abuse that I shall no longer be surprised

if one day I find one begging for employment as parish scavenger." Instead of abdicating before the revolutionaries, the princes of Savoy conceived the audacious idea of placing themselves at their head. Such was the great and lasting originality of their policy.

It is a strange thing : it was the most celebrated of the philosophers of the counter-revolutionary doctrine, Joseph de Maistre himself, who advised them to adopt this venturesome policy. A diplomatist in the service of the Kings of Sardinia, the author of *Le Pape*, showed his masters the path which was to lead them to the breach in the Porta Pia, to the entry into pontifical Rome, and to sacrilege. Joseph de Maistre was the first to suggest to the House of Savoy that the best part it could play was to ally itself with the young Liberal forces which were springing up in Italy, the better to subordinate them afterwards. Again, he told them that it was essential to march boldly against Austria. Now to march against Austria was to march against the Holy Alliance, against the European conservative party, on the side of the new spirit of Italy. However, you may find in a score of passages in the *Lettres diplomatiques* of Joseph de Maistre the audacious formulae which the Piedmontese monarchy was to apply. It was Joseph de Maistre and another who forged these maxims for the future kings of Italy :

"The diameter of Piedmont is not in proportion to the greatness and the nobility of the House of Savoy. . . . So long as I can still breathe I shall repeat that Austria is His Majesty's

natural and eternal enemy. . . . Beware of the Italian spirit ; it is born of the Revolution and will presently play its part in a great tragedy. . . . Let the king make himself the leader of the Italians ; in every civil and military employment let him employ revolutionaries indifferently. This is essential, vital, capital. . . . This is my last word : if we remain or become an obstacle : *requiem aeternam.*"

Such words and such warnings must have echoed profoundly in the mind of Carlo Alberto and Victor Emmanuel : must have urged them onward, and, at the same time, must have seemed to authorise them, in their own minds, to undertake their Italian enterprise. For to travel from Chambéry and Hautecombe to the Quirinal the House of Savoy had to travel not only through space, but in the domain of thought and feeling. For an ancient and God-fearing dynasty to pass from its old-style traditions to an alliance with the party of the Revolution, to join hands with Garibaldi, to take part in dispossessing the Pope, to face excommunication, it must have been necessary to overcome many prejudices and repugnances. The nineteenth century has seen other examples of monarchies which have succeeded in evolving and in becoming pliant, instead of resisting and breaking ; which have had the wisdom to await the moment when their prestige should revive, with the need of order and authority. But amid examples of development that of the House of Savoy was the most complete ; so complete that it was long the scandal of the whole party of European conservatism, so that this highly legitimate monarchy was



upheld to the execration of legitimists of every country.

. . . . .

Much suffering had to be undergone before a member of the House of Savoy, considering the past history of his house, could one day tell himself : " All is accomplished ! " On Carlo Alberto, a man of self-tormented mind, highly romantic, with a heart of extreme sensitiveness, was to fall the whole weight of a crisis that involved not merely a family, but a whole people. It was an internal crisis in the first place ; then it was European. It was a moral, a psychological crisis, before it became political.

Carlo Alberto, at the outset of his life, had been far removed from the throne. It was believed that he would never reign. He had himself believed this, and would readily have resigned himself to whatever destiny. Carlo Alberto was he whom fate had elected for the difficult decision which was to force itself upon his race in the middle of the nineteenth century. On him fell the responsibility of a grave determination, a weighty choice. A dynasty which had seen more than eight hundred years had to enter upon paths which were new and strangely perilous. The doubts, the hesitations, the sufferings, even the remorse of Carlo Alberto were thereby all the more cruel ; the break with the past was the more excruciating, in that a whole family, nay, a whole race, was perforce to share them. It was a drama of the conscience, if you will, but of the collective conscience. It is this that increases its tragedy and its grandeur.

Carlo Alberto, pious among the kings of his

time and of all times, an ascetic on the throne, as firmly attached to the Catholic religion as to the order of Europe, was nevertheless the prince who inaugurated a revolutionary policy, and who, not fearing to ally himself with the patriots of all Italy, was to create that scandal which he undoubtedly foresaw, and which was the torment of his life : the Cross of Savoy upraised against the Holy See. From the moment when he succeeded Carlo Felice, to his death, at Oporto, after the defeat of Novara and his abdication, the father of the first King of Italy showed that enigmatical and melancholy countenance which caused him to be nicknamed "The Sphinx." It was Victor Emmanuel II who revealed the secret ; it was Cavour who gave the key to the enigma, by continuing and completing the policy of which Carlo Alberto, full of scruples and repugnances, and faltering at times, had begun to trace the plan.

For Carlo Alberto, the king of the Holy Alliance, to transform himself into the king of the Revolution, he must have had a very clear and very powerful vision of his Italian mission, and of his duty toward his house and his people. It was to Metternich that he owed his crown. And in exchange for the recognition of his rights, which were supported by Austria against his own uncles, he had been forced secretly to promise always to maintain the old absolutist monarchy in Piedmont. It would seem as though the liberal youth of Turin, which as early as 1821 had risen and acclaimed Carlo Alberto, must have compromised him against his will. For we see him fighting in Spain for Ferdinand,



against the Constitutionals, and obtaining, but too late, permission from Carlo Felice to go to Paris, to defend Charles X during the days of the July Revolution. Lastly, himself a king, he vigorously suppressed the Piedmontese insurrection. In 1820, half a century before his own son had made Rome his capital, Carlo Alberto was writing :

“The goods of which the Church is despoiled bring misfortune to those that acquire them. Thus, when a very great crime is committed God not only punishes its author here below, but even makes him the object of terrible lessons to society.”

What a gulf—and what a conflict—between these ideas, which were the traditional ideas of the House of Savoy, and the ideas which were to make the Sardinian monarchy the instrument of Italian unity, and were to extend it from the limits of Piedmont to the ends of the Peninsula !

Carlo Alberto was for a long time—was always—to endeavour to reconcile the traditions of his race with its Italian mission, with the necessity forced upon his kingly function to establish the new, great country on the solid foundation of his dynasty. When he despaired of effecting this reconciliation it was for Italy that he finally decided. But he died of this great renunciation of his personal feelings. From that moment we see him failing, growing emaciated ; and finding that death did not come to him soon enough, risking it in battle and riot. He was heard to say : “I shall march until a bullet

enables me joyfully to end a life of vicissitudes which was wholly consecrated and sacrificed to my country." Around him—a sacrifice almost equally painful—his chivalry, the Sonnaz, Costas, and Robilants, the flower of the Savoyard nobility, shed their blood out of traditional fidelity to the king, for a cause which was not theirs and which revolted their personal feelings. M. de Beauregard relates that after the interview between Carlo Alberto and Garibaldi the old and faithful Sonnaz murmured: "This is the end of us." It was indeed an end of all that the most ancient House of Savoy had represented in the past. But how much greater was all that which it was to represent in the future! What a future was unfolding before it!

Joseph de Maistre has written: "The monarchy participates in the formation of a nation after the manner of the kernel which forms in the heart of a fruit." The Italians are agreed in recognising this truth; without the House of Savoy there would have been no Italy.

Here the mind cannot refrain from lingering, from musing, from reconstructing history. The French Revolution, whose ideas and results were to arouse the nationalism of Italy, as of Germany, was at the same time to hold at its mercy the two dynasties which actually created Italy and Germany: called them out of chaos, kneaded them into shape. The Revolution and Napoleon I, its heir and successor, all but annihilated Piedmont and Prussia, Hohenzollern and Carignan. At the moment when the future Wilhelm I, he who was to be crowned as Emperor at Versailles, was flying from Berlin under the falling snow—

it was after Jena—taking refuge with the Prussian Court in the wretched and precarious retreat provided by Memel—at this moment another child, the future Carlo Alberto, dispossessed of his rights, which his father had renounced for the sake of a pension which was, by the way, unpaid, was shivering with cold on the seat of the carriage to which he was derisively relegated by M. de Montléart, the second-hand husband of the Princess de Carignan, a woman forgetful of her royal blood. The French Revolution, victorious, was reigning in Berlin as in Turin. It had abolished the independence, the hope, almost the life of the two States. Yet the royal families in which these States were incarnated still survived. And thanks to the two little boys of 1806, Prussia and Piedmont were to live again, and to enjoy a dazzling revenge for the Napoleonic victories.

Fate was implacable to Carlo Alberto. Fate, and the divination of a man. Metternich, who foresaw perhaps not all things, as he boasted, but certainly many things, seemed to have foreseen, as the far-sighted enemy of Italian unity, the destiny of Carlo Alberto, who had no worse enemy, until the day when the skilful statesman judged it more expedient to chain him by a promise. For a long time the Carignans were erased from the royal Almanack of Sardinia. For a long time Carlo Alberto had to suffer the hatred and suspicion of his uncles before he succeeded them. But was not his motto “I await my star”? His destiny was to overcome all obstacles.

The history of the Italian revolutions of the

nineteenth century is long, confused, and even yet obscured by passion and by rivalry. One great fact dominates them and explains their final success : there was in Piedmont an ancient dynasty, firmly founded, which formed, in the midst of all upheavals, an element of continuity and strength. One by one all the Italian patriots, despite errors and illusions and failures, came to recognise that the salvation of their ideals resided in an alliance with the House of Savoy. Willingly or perforce—being constrained by evidence and necessity—they had to admit, each in his turn, that Italy could not assume a shape and a consciousness save by virtue of the most vigorous and also the most ambitious of her dynasties, and the only one of them which had a sense of Italian patriotism. To this nationalism Carlo Alberto sacrificed his faith and his traditions, as Mazzini and Manin sacrificed their democratic ideal. On one point, however, he was immovable : namely, in anything that threatened his authority. When he refused a constitution to his people Carlo Alberto deplored the fact, as he one day told Roberto d'Azeglio, that he was misunderstood. He considered that a constitution would have enfeebled the monarchy, and to enfeeble the monarchy in Piedmont would have been to hazard the future chances of the Italian party. What a drama was played when Mazzini, Manin, or Garibaldi went to the king, and he stifled his old repugnances in order to welcome the revolutionary leaders, and to negotiate with them and come to an understanding with them in cool blood ! The goodwill reciprocally evidenced by the pious monarch and the republican agitators,



united by the nationalist ideal, was not to be rewarded until a later date. At that time what nobility of mind was demanded, what sacrifice!

Mazzini announced the entire political development of the new Italy when he declared, as a true precursor :

“Despite all the aversion which I felt for Carlo Alberto, despite all the democratic aspirations which were seething in my heart, if I felt that Carlo Alberto were sufficiently ambitious to establish Italian unity I would cry *Amen!*”

After Mazzini it was Garibaldi's turn to say, as he landed at Naples : “I have never been a supporter of kings. But since Carlo Alberto has made himself the champion of the people's cause, my duty is to offer him my sword.”

And it was Manin himself who was to complete their action, and perhaps their thought also, when he said, in 1856, preferring Italy to the Republic :

“I accept the monarchy of Savoy provided it aids loyally and effectually in the creation of Italy. The Piedmontese monarchy, in order to be faithful to its mission, must always keep before its eyes the final aim : the independence and unification of Italy. It must profit by every occasion which may permit it to take a step forward on the path leading to this goal. . . . It must remain the kernel, the centre of attraction of the Italian nationality.”

Thus did patriotism place in the mouth of Manin the very words of Joseph de Maistre.

The Italian patriots of the nineteenth century

eventually without exception understood that their nationalism must, to succeed, become royalist, as Nino Bixio had said, and that their sole resource was represented by a monarchy capable of federating the Italian populations, so diverse, and separated by so many habits and interests and memories. In this respect the Italian democrats displayed a political intelligence infinitely superior to that of the Prussian Liberals, who needed the double victory of 1866 and 1870, and the justification which the policy of Bismarck received thereby, in order to rally to the Iron Chancellor and cease their opposition—an opposition profoundly absurd, since they desired the unity of Germany without admitting the means, which were those which Bismarck provided. In this contrast we may see the eternal superiority of the political spirit of the Italians.

The best, most ardent, and most far-sighted of the men of the *Risorgimento* all ended, sooner or later, by fighting at once for Italy and for the House of Savoy. Massimo d'Azeglio was one of the agents of this propaganda, one of these apostles. He toured the peninsula indefatigably, delivering to all the patriots whom he encountered on the way a sort of Socratic discourse, conceived more or less in the following words :

“After all, what do you want? To be delivered from the Germans? To escape from the clerical oligarchy? These gentry won't go of themselves, will they? They will have to be driven out. And in order to force people to clear out we must ourselves possess force. Now have you this force? No, you know you have not. And who in Italy is strong? Piedmont.



I see in your face that you do not like Piedmont, and no doubt you like her king even less. You say that one cannot hope for anything from Carlo Alberto? If you do not wish to hope for anything from him, do not; but do not set your trust in anyone else. I tell you, and I will repeat it: resign yourself to hope for Carlo Alberto's help, or hope for nothing at all."

. . . . .

This fusion of the democratic elements of Italy and the monarchy was to continue until our days: was to be the law of Italy's political life. The war of 1915 has once more seen the Barzilai and the Bissolati rally to the House of Savoy, as did their great forbears of the *Risorgimento*; as did Crispi himself. Signor Marcora, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, to whom Victor Emmanuel III, during the crisis of May 1915, offered the task of constituting the Ministry, was also one of those converted Republicans who for the last fifty years have always been represented in the councils of the Italian monarchy.

Thus necessity and patriotism summoned the Republicans to sacrifice their preferences, to gather, one by one, about the throne, mounting guard before it, the symbol and guarantee of the national unity so hardly achieved. To all minds ripened by experience, royalty appeared as one of their country's needs. "The monarchy unites us; the republic would divide us," said Crispi. And the danger of division was all the more serious because the Republic, in Italy, could never be otherwise than federal. And federalism,

on the morrow of unification, would have meant fresh dislocation.

Herein resided the great strength of the House of Savoy, during those years when—the example of France aiding its decline—the monarchical ideal was falling into decadence. Democrats like Mazzini, who had enounced the ideal of Italian unity, in the middle of the nineteenth century, had begun by devising the scheme which seduced George Sand :

“There are in Italy, including the Pope and the Emperor of Austria, seven kings or dukes (Piedmont, Naples, Parma, Modena, Tuscany). Let us make use of one of these—Victor Emmanuel—to overthrow the other six. This once accomplished, it will be easy to overthrow the seventh . . .”

“An error,” so Proudhon warned them ; and where Italian affairs were concerned he was often a good prophet.

“In the State which he founds Victor Emmanuel will be a national king, a popular king, and his monarchy will continue as a centre of attraction for all Italians. . . .”

This view of Proudhon’s was so correct that to all appearances it was also that which served as a guide to the House of Savoy.

Succeeding to Carlo Alberto, Victor Emmanuel had learned a lesson from the trials which his father had undergone. With him the House of Savoy gave itself boldly to the prevailing winds ; Liberalism and Nationalities—this was its motto. And the Piedmontese monarchy, a highly legitimate monarchy, was seen to attack and to dethrone

monarchies no less legitimate than itself. In Germany, to establish unity, the kings of Prussia did little more than suppress one other king—the King of Hanover, with the Elector of Hesse and the Duke of Nassau. The House of Savoy had to shatter many more crowns. It had to attack the Triple Crown itself, and for this work of revolution—not Italian merely, but European—it had to accept the help of avowed revolutionists.

This complicity—which, however, was confessed, was displayed in the face of day—was for a long time to earn the opprobrium of the conservatives. These, in general, were mistaken as gravely as the Republicans as to the future of the Italian monarchy, and mistaken in the same fashion. They predicted that Victor Emmanuel or his descendants, having appealed to the Revolution, would perish by the Revolution. What they did not foresee was that the House of Savoy, being more skilful, more supple, more far-sighted than other dynasties, would succeed in appeasing the monster.

The difficulty, for Victor Emmanuel, was to establish in Italy a subversive monarchy founded on the ruin of the temporal power of the Popes, and on the débris of other thrones, which should nevertheless remain a monarchy, retaining its character and its authority. The first condition of success in so delicate an undertaking was perfectly fulfilled by the first King of Italy. This was to stifle, in his Savoyard heart, the prejudices and the scruples of his race; all those elements in the traditions of his house which were merely sentimental. And Victor Emmanuel

II was the man for this task. With his minister Cavour he was an example of what audacious things may be accomplished in this world by minds born for politics, able to shape themselves according to their political interest. Certain phrases, which are still famous, and for which they have been much reproached, such as "Do it, but do it quickly," used to shock the conservative and legitimist Europe of fifty years ago. However, Victor Emmanuel was founding a new legitimism for the future.

He founded it on the Italian sense of nationality, a powerful sentiment, by which he was wholly penetrated. People were wrong to deny his sensibility; or rather, they made the mistake of misunderstanding it. His feelings were nationalist; they went out to an oppressed Italy, a martyred, suffering Italy. When, to the great consternation of European diplomacy, he asserted his intention of responding to the Italian people's "cry of suffering," a cry which rent his heart, Victor Emmanuel revealed the fact that he yearned over the Italian nationality with the bowels of a father.

The kings of Italy have continued in this new tradition. But beside them, in their own palaces—and—who shall say?—unknown, perhaps, in the depths of their beings—the old tradition persisted, and at moments burst into flame. This dualism, which made a martyr of Carlo Alberto, was to find other victims among his descendants.

Like a symbol of the moral history of his race, of the mental drama of her family, was that strange and unhappy Princess Clotilde, who



drifted through the triumphs of the House of Savoy, head of one of the most modern States of Europe, like a figure stepped forth from some stained-glass window of Hautecombe.

Fate willed it that Princess Clotilde should leave this world in the very year when Italy was celebrating the jubilee of her political resurrection, some days after the inauguration of the monument which, hard by the Rome of antiquity, and facing the Rome of the Popes, glorifies Victor Emmanuel II and the unity of Italy. Princess Clotilde died during the celebrations of that United Italy to which her woman's life had been sacrificed.

More than one Frenchman, more than one Frenchwoman still surviving will remember that February day of 1859 when the little Princess made her entry into Paris. These observers cannot have forgotten the sadness painted on the features of this child of sixteen years. They will remember her bizarre head-dress, a *capote* in the fashion of the period, far too severe for her age. Paris, however, welcomed her with enthusiasm; for Paris was then at the most impassioned height of her infatuation for the Italian cause. The marriage of the daughter of Victor Emmanuel II with Prince Napoleon, twenty years her senior, was a marriage of political convenience. This union sealed the alliance concluded between the Empire and the House of Savoy. Princess Clotilde had been married at Plombières by Cavour. She was, as it were, the hostage of Italian unity. And the most sorrowful part of her destiny was that she, who had remained faithful to the traditions of Savoy, she, the pious



daughter of the Church, the god-child of Pio Nono, was to suffer from the political successes to which her marriage had contributed, and which were to lead her father to Rome, to the Palace of the Quirinal, the residence of the Papacy.

It is said that Victor Emmanuel, rough though his outer husk might be, could not refrain from weeping when, after long hesitations, his daughter at length accepted the husband for whom politics had destined her. Victor Emmanuel realised the extent of the sacrifice which he was requiring of his daughter. But he did not insist upon this sacrifice. The little Princess consented freely to the project concluded between Napoleon III and her father's minister. Princess Clotilde was as it were another Iphigenia. It was one of the most affecting dramas presented by the royal lives of the last century.

It is said that on reaching the Palais-Royal, which was then Prince Napoleon's residence, the young Princess begged her husband that he would allow her to have a supply of holy water at her disposal, as had been her custom in Piedmont.

"Holy water? Let them send to the grocer's to see if there is any left," replied the Prince, a notorious atheist, a figure at the famous Ash-Wednesday dinners, who doubtless counted on inducing the young woman to abandon her pious practices.

The obstinate gentleness of the Princess Clotilde won the day. Nothing disturbed her beliefs; nothing modified her manner of life. She compelled the admiration of the hard, violent man whom politics had given her as husband. Everywhere she made herself loved and respected.

Napoleon III, always anxious to legitimise himself, had desired this marriage, apart from his diplomatic ends, as a means of giving greater brilliance to the Tuileries, by introducing to the Palace a princess of the blood royal. The Austrian Ambassador had impertinently remarked that his Court was "lacking in aristocracy," but he knew it without that. Princess Clotilde, the daughter of a King of Sardinia and an Archduchess of Austria, was, according to the Emperor's ideas, to put an end to the sulky behaviour of foreign Courts. Princess Clotilde was not unaware of this fact. And we know the reply, so surprising on the lips of a girl of sixteen, which she addressed to the Empress Eugénie. The Empress had wished to advise the young wife as to her deportment, mistaking her melancholy and reserve for timidity and embarrassment. To her remarks, the Princess simply responded: "You forget, madame, I was born at Court."

The Empire fell. Victor Emmanuel entered Rome. Here were fresh occasions of suffering for Princess Clotilde. For her life she would not recognise the accomplished fact, the policy with which the House of Savoy was associated. This is why she ended her days in the Piedmontese château of Moncalieri. There she led a life of privation, recollection, and charity. Daughter, sister, or aunt of the kings of Italy, she refused to associate herself with their triumph, although she had made herself its voluntary servant. Rome the capital saw nothing of her; she would have feared to sanction, by her presence, the events of 1870. When Prince Napoleon lay

dying in an hotel near the Piazza del Popolo, Clotilde pushed her scruples to the point of asking Leo XIII for permission to enter Rome. In 1878, at the news that her father was about to die, she decided to visit the Quirinal. Then, learning on the way that Victor Emmanuel was dead, she returned to Moncalieri.

Thus Princess Clotilde, sacrificed to the future of the House of Savoy, was its martyr. As for the new Italy, she not ungratefully remembers the young girl of royal race who long ago devoted herself to her cause, and whose figure will live in Italian history as the symbol of the reconciliation and alliance of two contrary traditions. This gentle phantom, amid the sterner faces of the founders of United Italy, succeeded in exorcising the Revolution.

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If there is a country and a government for which the well-known formula "neither reaction nor revolution" has a meaning, that country is Italy and that government the Italian monarchy. The Italian State was created in spite of the powers of the past, by making use of the extremest elements of democracy; it was important that it should make sure, in the course of its future destinies, that these powers should not take their revenge, nor these elements rule it. It was necessary, on the contrary, that it should absorb them both. And this the Italian monarchy succeeded in doing; slowly, but surely.

It found, among others, one minister who illustrated this policy in a vigorous and original fashion. This was the Marchese di Rudini. A great noble, a great landowner, a man of

traditions and principles, a "man of the past" in many respects, Di Rudini, by rallying to the House of Savoy, perhaps made a sacrifice no less than that made by the republican patriots of his time; like them, he subordinated his personal inclinations to the interest of his country. Once it had passed through the period of birth, he was one of those who kept in mind the desirability of causing the revolutionary beginnings of the new monarchy to be forgotten, and of reconciling it by degrees with the conservative elements. This was the work to which he desired to devote himself when in 1895 he was called in to repair the errors of Crispi.

But the Marchese di Rudini was obsessed by one anxiety: he trembled continually for the unity of Italy, a unity conquered at the cost of such labour, and which never would have been achieved but for a conjunction of circumstances of which some, like the support of France, were really unhelped-for. He therefore watched un-restingly over those elements of division which might, in the young Italy, survive the work of unification. On the Right and on the Left, in the north and in the south, everywhere he saw the enemies of unity. He was only the more firmly attached to the dynasty, without which the ruin of the national work, the decomposition of the peninsula, appeared to him inevitable.

Twice, in fact, Di Rudini had to struggle against insurrections in which he saw the danger of separatism, and the confirmation of the anxieties with which the fragility of United Italy had inspired him. These two risings were very dissimilar. However, he suppressed them with



equal vigour. In 1866, when still quite a young man, he had been forced, as Syndic of Palermo, to put down an insurrection organised by the supporters of the Bourbon monarchy. He then showed himself implacable, as he was thirty years later, when rioting broke out in Milan which suddenly assumed a serious character. This seditious movement Di Rudini denounced as political and not as social, as inimical to the monarchy and the national unity, not to society. He accused "anarchism, black and red," of plotting against the State and the country, and, while he suppressed both Radical and Catholic newspapers, he caused a Socialist like Turati to be condemned by his courts-martial, and a priest like the Abato Albertario.

Reaction and revolution: the monarchy has succeeded in steering between these two reefs. The occasions on which severity has been necessary have been rare. With their characteristic suppleness, the members of the House of Savoy have succeeded in retaining the old fidelity of the Piedmontese loyalists and in welcoming the representatives of all Italy, so different as to manners and feelings and opinions, whom they have united "under their sceptre," to use a time-honoured expression, which in this case is true enough. Prophets of evil augury were not lacking to predict that it would be impossible to get elements so diverse to march in step, or to harmonise all the Italian contradictions. The Savoyard monarchy gave the lie to all these prophecies. It was able to induce the north of Italy, so pervaded by Gallic influence, and southern Italy, which was almost African, to live together on friendly terms. It



continued to welcome the adhesion of the advanced democrats, and it was careful not to reject or regard with suspicion the ancient aristocracy which had served the Bourbons of Naples. It has been truly national, truly superior to the spirit of party. It has profited by the experience which was only too lacking in the first Parliamentary and Constitutional kings of the nineteenth century; it has compromised itself with no group, and has not preferred one before another. Perhaps if we could probe the mentality of the kings of Italy we should find, at the back of their minds, the idea that one party is as good as another, that all are composed of men who are no worse than their fellows, who are all equally capable of being employed for the good of their country. When, in 1876, the exhausted Right was forced to relinquish power in favour of the Left, Victor Emmanuel II was able to welcome Depretis and Crispi without an effort. He did not suppose—and he was right—that his throne was in danger. He regarded radicalism and democracy as fashions, liable to change, but which it would have been imprudent to oppose when they were at the height of their vogue. The members of the House of Savoy have not made the mistake of insisting upon retaining their Polignacs or their Guizots. Victor Emmanuel, for example, did not dream of retaining his old and faithful soldiers of bygone conflicts, the Piedmontese Moderates and Conservatives. The Radicals justified his faith. They proved that they were not so terrible as he had been told—that they soon became tractable when in power. And the Right, later on, had its turn, with other

men ; Signor Salandra is to-day the representative of the new spirit. No more timid than his grandfather, Victor Emmanuel III was not afraid of universal suffrage, and the event proved that he too was right, since, at the first electoral consultation, the scrutiny in which all Italy took part sent only fourteen Republicans to the Chamber—fewer than had been elected by the limited suffrage ! And what Republicans, moreover ! Signor Barzilaï was of their number : to-day, beside a conservator like Signor Salandra, he is a minister of the Monarchy.

The throne should be that point whereat all the colours of a country mingle. Thus the members of the House of Savoy were able to tell themselves that the red of a Garibaldian shirt might well, from their point of view, blend with the purple of a Cardinal's mantle. They suffered neither from the superstitious fear of emblems, nor a dread of popular songs. They allowed the revolutionary and patriotic hymn of Mameli to be sung at the same time as the royal anthem. Have not all tunes seven notes ? Blacks or whites, they have made no distinctions ; and more than one gentleman of their Court has had a relative, a brother, in the Noble Guard of the Vatican. So the national fusion has been effected ; the "pacification," according to the desires of that French statesman one of whose political formulæ we just now discovered, unexpressed as yet, in the baggage of the Italian monarchy.

Without any Machiavellism, by the sole effect of their application to professional duty (is not the vocation of king, with its dangers, of which King Humbert used to speak so serenely, a

profession like any other ?) ; by what their minds possessed of freedom also, and their conscience of nobility, the men of the House of Savoy have succeeded in forging the moral unity of Italy. And was not this still more difficult of achievement than its political unity ? Having come to the throne of Italy by virtue of the conflict between two opposing principles, they have rendered them impotent, and have put an end to their autonomy, replacing it by the national synthesis. All the rival or inimical Italies of other days are reconciled in Nationalism and Imperialism. The House of Savoy has disarmed the reaction. As for the Revolution, it might well, reviving a famous phrase, boast that it has "taken the stain out of it." Both reaction and revolution form part of the Italian past, of the Italian inheritance, but neither one nor the other prevails in public life. If one day a reaction sets in, or a revolution, they will no longer resemble themselves ; they will no longer be what they were. All that past has subdued itself with the heart of Carlo Alberto. His sufferings have freed his successors, and thanks to them the sole watchword of Italy is henceforth : the Future.

## CHAPTER III

### THE NATIONALIST TRADITION

Independence and "Liberty"—The period of conflict and its sacrifices—How a nation is born—The union of classes—The Princess Belgiojoso—The Chevalier Nigra—The work of the people—The hunchback of Brescia—Irredentism—Guglielmo Oberdank—The primordial importance of literature—From Gioberti to d'Annunzio—Italian poetry of the nineteenth century, or Nationalist lyricism—Leopardi, the false pessimist—Carducci, the national poet of the Third Italy—The Fourth Italy and Gabriele d'Annunzio.

THE Italy of the nineteenth century, whose thoughts and feelings prepared and nourished the Italy of to-day, was in its day very imperfectly comprehended by contemporary France. Perhaps it has yet to be discovered. It is impossible to understand the Italy of to-day, and, for example, the movement which impelled it to make war in 1915, if we persist in misunderstanding the Italy of yesterday.

The public opinion of France, in the nineteenth century, was very seriously in error respecting a great many points of foreign politics; many of which points were of essential importance to France. As far as Italy was concerned, the common error was to confound Liberty, as the French conceived it for themselves, with the



liberty to which the Italians aspired. Here there was a remarkable historical contradiction. When, in the middle of the nineteenth century, a Frenchman spoke of "Liberty," it was political liberty that he meant. France was an ancient nation, which had long ago achieved unity, had attained her frontiers, no longer expected very much from the outer world, and was more used to dominating other peoples than to see foreigners intervening in her affairs. Liberty, therefore, was in France conceived in relation to the Government, institutions, and society. The liberty in question was a sort of supererogatory liberty : it implied universal suffrage, the exercise of certain political rights, the appropriation of power by the popular classes, the extension of democracy. To the eyes of the Italians of the same period, and in their dreams, liberty appeared in a very different shape. On the two sides of the mountains the goddess was far from representing the same symbol. The Italians were burning to win their national independence. They had to free themselves from the yoke of the conqueror, to knit together the scattered members of their country, to constitute themselves as a State and as a nation. The liberty which they demanded was the liberty to live, and therefore to develop, to increase their stature, as Italians.

So there was only an apparent relation, almost a fictitious one, and merely a fortuitous similarity of words between the aspirations of the Italian patriot and those of the French Liberal. The one, perhaps without realising it, was tending toward nationalism ; the other toward democracy. As so often happens in this world where



union and fraternity are concerned, the Franco-Italian friendship has lived long and endured and prospered on a misunderstanding. And when, as on various occasions, relations between the two peoples have become strained, this deplorable result must again be attributed to the same misunderstanding. The French democracy has been bitterly disappointed whenever it has discovered that Italy neither feels nor thinks precisely in its own fashion ; when, for example, it saw Italy taking another path than that of the ideal of 1848, and retaining her monarchy ; when it saw Italy, resuscitated, working for herself, thinking of herself, indifferent to the future of European liberalism, associating herself with Imperial Germany, and even with her oppressor of the day before, no other than the Austria of the Habsburgs. France was at times irritated by the policy which Italy followed between 1870 and the red-letter day of her recent break with the Triple Alliance. This feeling of irritation, which was extremely dangerous, and has by no means facilitated the task of our diplomatists, has always been born of error and illusion, of the misunderstanding which was cherished by the France of the nineteenth century.

It is by understanding whence Italy has come and whither she is going that we shall enjoy the best chance of maintaining good relations with her. To wish to love is not everything. One must know what one loves, and one loves in proportion as one understands the beloved object ; as a great Italian, Leonardo da Vinci, once observed. Let us then realise that the Italians of to-day bear within their veins and cherish in their

memories one of the noblest national passions that history has beheld. Such is the legacy which the last century bequeathed to them. Such is their great moral and intellectual inheritance. To them has been handed on the flame of a devouring patriotism.

How insipid have the majority of French writers made this high adventure, which is yet of so dramatic an essence ; the adventure of a whole people conceiving the same ideal, and, at the call of a few inciting voices, devoting themselves to the same task ! The struggles for the deliverance and the resurrection of Italy, the spirit of that stormy period—these we understand better, since we ourselves have experienced the domination of the foreigner and the conquest of our native soil. In tenacity and the capacity for sacrifice the Italian patriots of the nineteenth century are worthy to serve as models for all those who in the future shall be ambitious to deliver and uplift their native country. Aristocrats, intellectuals, plebeians : men of all classes, united in the same aspiration, the same effort, collaborated in the same work. While a Cavour was labouring to realise Italian unity by the subtlest methods of diplomacy and politics, one might have seen even an Orsini, through his fanatical regard of the same ideal, devoting himself to the propaganda of action. And we are not ignorant of the influence of Orsini's bombs on the course of history, since it was from the day of his attempt that we must date that sort of conscientious crisis in the mind of Napoleon III, after which he resolved to intervene actively

in favour of Italy. But even this intervention, which was so popular in France, would not have been possible without a long period of preparation, a patient and enthusiastic propaganda. The cause of United Italy had begun by gaining eloquent missionaries, zealous propagandists, among the elect, before it was able to obtain from Europe the assistance of which it stood in need. The Italian patriots, before they gathered the harvest, had been sowing the seed for more than twenty-five years. With a complete knowledge of the European situation, and a veritable power of divination, they understood that it was France which they must begin by conquering, and above all the elect of France. This was foreseen with perfect conviction by such precursors as Princess Belgiojoso, whose name will remain inscribed in the history of the new Italy no less than in the history of French literature and French society.

One would not venture to wish for any woman the fate, nor the way of life, of a Princess Belgiojoso. Yet the example of this Italian woman shows what the influence of a woman of heart and intellect may be when she devotes herself to the service of a great cause. Princess Belgiojoso consecrated to the cause of Italian unity not only her intelligence, her fortune, and her name. Her personal misfortunes, and the liberty of her life—these too she devoted to her country. Suckled on conspiracies, bred up in the hatred of the foreign oppressor, this young Milanese girl, a daughter of the illustrious family of Trivulce, was familiar from earliest childhood with the first hopes and the first battles of the Italian

patriots. At sixteen years of age Cristina Trivulce married Prince Belgiojoso. This was at the moment of the Congress of Verona, when the Holy Alliance was taking measures of precaution against the symptoms of agitation which were then appearing in Italy. The *carbonari* were prosecuted; the *ventes* were dissolved. The Princess, who before her marriage had been a *gardiniera*, as they termed the women who were members of secret societies, had to tread the path of exile. An adventurous career was opening before her. Like so many other Italians of the *Risorgimento*, she was henceforth to lead the life of a female knight-errant, and she might have said, as Massimo d'Azeglio said later: "I have made my home on the open road."

Her tribulations began with a divorce. Prince Belgiojoso and his wife were unable to understand one another. Perhaps they were both too passionate by nature. The Princess was beautiful; she was to be greatly loved; her tender and enduring connection with Mignet is well known. As for the Prince, he too was the hero of an idyll—which was in its day a scandal. One day he disappeared from Paris, and at the same time also disappeared the Duchess of Piacenza. Both lived for many years on the banks of Lake Como. The Revolution of 1848, the convulsions which rent his country, passed by the Prince without affecting him; he lived his personal romance apart from the great national romance of Italy—as a marginal note, so to speak.

The woman who in Paris bore his name and was making it illustrious had, on the contrary, never ceased to feed the flame of Italian patriotism.



Her work was to aid in spreading, as an intellectual fashion, the idea that the cause of Italian liberation was the noblest cause in the world ; a cause in which generous France should be the first to interest herself. In the Princess Belgiojoso's *salon* the wit and patience, cunning and determination of a woman were shaping a state of mind and preparing a policy. The enthusiasm of so many French writers for United Italy was inspired by her indefatigable and invincible and ever-renewed enthusiasm. How many Press campaigns, how many books and speeches in favour of Italian unity would never have been written or delivered but for the influence, charm, and seductiveness of the Princess Belgiojoso ! Heinrich Heine and De Musset, to speak of these only, were willingly or unwillingly to collaborate in her work ; one despite his irony, and the other despite his detachment and his dandyism. She understood how to utilise to the dregs the ambition and the veering convictions of Thiers. The life of society, literary glory, friendship, love, and even good cookery ; Vincent Bellini and Buloz, the Opera and the *Revue des Deux-Mondes*—Princess Belgiojoso enrolled them all in the service of her unhappy country. All, to her thinking, ought to serve ; and as a matter of fact all did. It would be no exaggeration to say that Magenta and Solferino were in great part the work of her *salon*. In any case her *salon* and her circle must not be neglected by any historian of the letters, manners, and public opinion of the nineteenth century.

The revolution of 1848 brought disappointment to Princess Belgiojoso. With all Italian patriots,



she was tortured by the defeat of Novara, which seemed to annihilate all hope of unity. But it was especially the attitude of the Second Republic, and the French intervention in Rome, which wounded her. She swore that she would never again show her face in Paris, in the city which seemed to have deceived her. However, ten years had not gone by when she was able to see the fruits of her zeal and her propaganda. She was able to see little Cavour appointed a minister of the Kingdom of Italy, a kingdom constituted by the aid of France; Cavour, now grown so great, whom she had formerly, when he was still unknown, introduced, in Paris, to the statesmen of France. . . .

Princess Belgiojoso died a few months after the Italians had made their entry into Rome. It was given to her to witness the complete realisation of the Italian dream. But did she not find successors to continue her work of propaganda, to occupy, in the society of the Second Empire, the position which she had held under the monarchy of July ?

Princess Belgiojoso seduced our statesmen and our men of letters. The task of the Chevalier Nigra was to conquer the Court of Napoleon III. And as chance willed it Nigra died, burdened with years, in 1907, at the moment when Italy was celebrating the centenary of Garibaldi's birth. Nigra and Garibaldi, so different in temperament, as in their origins, their actions, and their ideals, had nevertheless both aimed at the same result. The young aristocrat, the protégé of Cavour, and the red-shirted agitator—each, in his fashion, served the cause of Italian

unity and the House of Savoy. Each delighted to surround himself with an atmosphere of mystery and legend, which, in France above all, was of peculiar value in the accomplishment of his object. One as a man of the world, one as a man of the crowd, they were, by reason of their commanding appearance, and their adventures of all kinds—adventures warlike or amorous—the heroes, the demi-gods of the Italian cause.

While Garibaldi made the conquest of the great French public by the plebeian epic of his career, the other accomplished the more difficult task of reducing the *entourage* of the Emperor. Napoleon III, even before he came into power, was won over to the *Risorgimento*. Around him, close to his person, there were not lacking those who were ill disposed toward the interests of United Italy. The Chevalier Nigra was the handsome, melancholy young man who came to the Imperial Court to move the women in favour of the noble captive. He was gallant out of patriotism, or at least he made his affairs of the heart serve the interests of his country. He came to Versailles bringing with him all the poetry of the peninsula. Venice, Florence and Rome, Dante and Petrarch, Titian and Raphael, all spoke through his mouth, and spoke, we are told, with charm and eloquence. Cavour had made an artistic choice in this ambassador of confidential missions; he was Don Juan as diplomatist, who in the midst of his triumphs never forgot his ambassadorial duties.

There was yet one heart untouched by the cause of Italy. And this heart was set so high

that the melancholy Don Juan could not hope to gain access to it. The Empress was not merely pious as a Spaniard; Morny was not mistaken when he said of her that she was even more "legitimist" than he. By her feelings, by her beliefs, the Empress was opposed to the Italian policy of the Empire. She was the constant and ardent adversary of this policy. Protesting by her tears even more eloquently than by her gestures, she had quitted the Council of Ministers at which the Emperor had resolved to recognise the new Kingdom of Italy. She was extremely hard upon Nigra, as on everything that came from Piedmont. However, the skilful courtier had his hour. It was the magic of the name of Venice that was to win it for him. It was he who, on the lake at Fontainebleau, replacing the inarticulate gondolier, sang a celebrated serenade, in which, it is said, the collaboration of Mérimée counted for something. And the serenade said :

O woman, if at times  
Thy peaceful lake  
Sees sailing beside thee  
The silent emperor,  
Tell him that on the Adriatic shore,  
Poor, naked, bloodless,  
Venice pines and suffers.

It was audacious; also the "silent emperor" was something of a gem. But the day was soon to come when the great silent figure was to speak. And his speech, which was to announce the deliverance of the Italian captives—did not the Chevalier Nigra, with his invocation at Fontainebleau, make it easier for him to pronounce it?

On the 4th of September it was Nigra, assisted

—what a singular conjunction!—by Count Metternich, who dragged the Empress from the Tuileries, and saved her from the attacks of the mob. In their persons Italy and Austria met above the tomb of the Empire. And it has been claimed that the two ambassadors, with every appearance of chivalry and personal devotion, were thereby accomplishing a skilful operation which rendered a service to their countries. For the departure of the Empress-Regent was the end of the Imperial Government, and thenceforth Italy and Austria were freed from their engagements and their alliance with Napoleon III. . . . This would have been too Machiavellic; and Nigra never deigned to defend himself against such a suspicion. But the familiar guest at the Tuileries and Compiègne, the friend of prosperous days, was always sensible of the reproach directed against Italy, that she deserted France in her misfortune. All his life he protested against this accusation of ingratitude; and he, who wrote so little, published a sketch of the events of 1870 in which he proved that Russia, desirous of effacing the results of the Crimean War and the Congress of Paris, had intimidated Austria and Italy, and had constrained them to remain neutral. Thus Nigra, who had so well served his country, was not willing that his honour as a gentleman should be sullied by the suspicion of treachery toward the country of which he had been the guest, fêted, admired, and beloved.

Princess Belgiojoso and Chevalier Nigra were, in their worldly, fashionable sphere, as much the artisans of the Italian *Risorgimento* as Cavour,



Garibaldi, or La Marmora. But beside these blazing stars, how many obscure heroes were there ! Beside these illustrious careers, rewarded by glory, how many instances of devotion which earned no wages but the satisfaction of an impassioned patriotism ! In the course of the nineteenth century, which has seen so many nationalist movements awaken and flourish, beside those tragic epics enacted by Alsace-Lorraine, Ireland, Poland, Bohemia, and the Slav peoples of the Balkans, the martyrology of Italy has had its magnificent pages. From them emanate an enthusiasm and an idealism which in 1915, across the years, were not without their influence over the sentiments and the will of the Italian people.

What energy of love and hate were needed before the Italian people could succeed in shattering the rule of Austria ! A hundred heroic episodes, which form the history of this struggle against the rule of the stranger, find their summary in a few which have remained particularly famous. Such is the story of the hunchback of Brescia. It is like those tales, gloomy yet ardent, which M. Barrès has assembled in his book *Du sang, de la volupté, et de la mort*. It might with honour take its place there, beside that dramatic short story for which the Carlist wars provided the subject, and which is entitled *La haine emporte tout*.

There was in Brescia, at the time of the Austrian occupation, a garrison composed of Croats : notably moustachio'd, particularly ferocious, especially detested ; for the Croat at that time stood for tyranny and oppression, like his half-brother the Cossack, and no one had as yet



dreamed of making the latter the soldier of right and justice. But if there were Croats in Brescia there was also a hunchbacked patriot. And every time the hunchback crossed the great piazza of the city, where the guard-house was situated, there was laughter and ignoble jesting among these blackguards. One day, profiting by the hour, solitude, and the absence of their commander, the Croats seized upon the cripple with the design of making him their butt. What atrocious fancy suddenly entered the brain of one of these brutes? A voice proposed that they should smear the captive with tar, then burn him alive. The hunchback thought at first that they intended a test, a cruel pleasantry. When he saw the Croats proceeding to the execution of their project, which was pitilessly to reduce him to the state of a living torch, like a Christian in the Neronian circus, he realised that he was lost. Then he conceived a sublime and horrible vengeance. Seeking with his eyes that one amid his murderers whose face expressed the vilest cruelty and cowardice, he waited until the fire began to devour him and then, bounding upon his victim, he embraced him with a grip so frantic that the other soldiers could not detach him. So the Croat was burned to death with the hunchback, who at least knew the delight of not quitting this life without dragging his enemy down to the tomb with him.

Such episodes form the tragical climaxes of a long history. In every-day life, in the never-ending wars of defence which an oppressed nationality was forced to wage, the nameless bulk of the Italian people displayed energy, and a

patience worthy of all admiration. Men sacrificed their lives, and their possessions too; a daily sacrifice which produces no exaltation, and which must be obtained from the many, and which, for these reasons, is not obtained without effort. When Milan was as yet in chains the Milanese patriots calculated that the expenses of the Austrian army of occupation were precisely liquidated by the receipts of the tobacco *régie* in that city. The Milanese therefore resolved strictly to abstain from the use of tobacco, and, what is more, they kept their words. When an Italian, breaking the pact, appeared in the streets cigar in mouth, the cigar was snatched from him; he was lucky if he was not beaten, treated as an accomplice of the oppressor, an *austriacante*, a traitor. This was a petty kind of warfare, but such instances revealed the mental state of the people, and its fierce resolution. And this petty warfare effectually served the greater conflict.

Long after, in Trieste and the Trentino, these memories inspired those Italians who were subject to the domination of Austria, as were those of Venice and Milan before the great liberation. These examples from the past taught resistance, hope, and sacrifice to the inhabitants of the *terre irredente*. Guglielmo Oberdank, hero and martyr of the Italian cause in the new period of the struggle against Austria, who, like Orsini, risked his head in an unsuccessful attempt at regicide, was nourished, inspired, and exalted by the examples afforded by the patriots of the *Risorgimento*. He had dreamed of doing for Trieste what others had done for Venice and Milan. In his solitary student's chamber, where

he had formed the project of assassinating the Emperor Francis-Joseph, of striking down the tyrant, he intoxicated himself with draughts of history, with memories refined and exalted by literature and poetry. As he was hurling his weapon against the Habsburg, a thousand suggestions were stirring in his mind. And on the day of his execution perhaps those last lines of the *Saluto italico* recalled themselves to his memory: "Confronting the foreigner who is still encamped, in arms, upon our soil, sing ye, sing ye, Italy, Italy, Italy!"

For the influence of literature upon the destinies of the Italian people has been considerable. It would be impossible to exaggerate it. There has been nothing of the kind in France; we cannot imagine anything like it. Our greatest poets of the nineteenth century sang of humanity, liberty, and glory rather than of country; when they did not, like Lamartine in his *Marseillaise de la Paix* (a sublime harmony, incomparably musical, based on a false idea which the future was to prove untrue), actually deny the very ideal of the native land.

Nations ! mot pompeux pour dire barbarie,  
L'amour s'arrête-t-il où s'arrêtent vos pas ?  
Déchirez ces drapeaux ; une autre voix vous crie  
L'égoïsme et la haine ont seuls une patrie,  
La Fraternité n'en a pas. . .<sup>1</sup>

Even Germany, whose modern poetry is so

<sup>1</sup> "Nations!—a pompous word signifying barbarism—does love tarry where your steps have halted?—Rend these banners: another voice cries to you—that egoism and hatred alone have a country:—fraternity has none."

steeped in the warlike Teutonic spirit, cannot approach what Italy has produced in this domain. The whole of Italian lyric poetry, and the noblest of it, is nationalist. Of the literature of the political rebirth of Italy the French are principally aware of the work of Silvio Pellico. *Le Mie Prigioni* was the sentimental and popular romance of United Italy, just as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* popularised the cause of the liberation of the blacks. But the poets of whom France knows little (for they would be difficult, all but impossible, to translate) are the scholarly poets who undertook to restore Italian art and the Italian tongue even as the country itself was renovated. From Alfieri to d'Annunzio all the great poets of Italy have in the deepest sense been nationalists. By their method and their passion they often remind us of the renaissance of the *Félibres*, of that powerful and highly original movement by which Frédéric Mistral, surrounded by a whole school of poets, resuscitated his native Provence, rehabilitating its manners, its language, and its literature, by means of which, at the same time, he gave expression to new conceptions of regionalism and decentralisation which did much for national life. An epic poet, a philologist, and a grammarian, Mistral was also, by the natural development of his mind, one of the most fertile propagandists of political ideals known to his time. M. Maurice Barrès has justly observed that Mistral's work had a universal value, and that so far from being confined to the Provençal world it has had a vivifying effect upon the whole of France. Beginning at Arles, it found an echo in Strasbourg. Those who know Mistral, the *Félibrige*, and his



poem of *The Countess* (captive Provence) in *The Isles of Gold*, those who know what the school of the Féligrige has been, and the multiform influence which it has exerted, and continues to exert, have only to recall this example in order to realise what, in a wider sphere, comprising a whole nation, the alliance between Italian poetry and Italian nationalism was to mean.

Haughty, tempestuous, impassioned, Alfieri, stifling in his narrow Piedmont, was already aspiring after a greater Italy. We accept Leopardi as the poet of absolute pessimism, the poet of despair, of nothingness, disgusted with all things. Yet does the man who nourishes himself upon tears, the man who is "spiritually dead," care for the public welfare, the greatness of the nation? Does he feel the ills of his country; does he thrill with the hatred and the hopes of the oppressed? But Leopardi felt all these things keenly and interpreted them with genius. His poems open with the famous Ode to Italy. "O my country! . . . Weep, you have indeed cause to weep, my Italy, born to surpass the nations!" Art and love, glory and the native land: we may say of Leopardi that he knew the highest objects which give value to human life. And he clung to them with all the might of passion and intelligence. He did not merely believe; he experienced; he knew that these things were worth the labour of living. He was no incurable pessimist. His verses were life-giving, and they still engender action.

The case of Giosué Carducci is perhaps the most characteristic of all. Carducci might have boasted with as much reason as the author of



the *Odi funerali*, that he was never anything but a "lyric poet." However, through his whole career and through all his work resounded those events through which the Italy of his day was passing. The purely lyrical writer was a great national poet.

The example of Carducci, who was by no means a popular bard, but a scholarly poet, a grammarian, shows how political ideals and opinions may influence literary theories. The conflict between the classics and the romantics, which has passed through so many phases in France, was also one of the accompaniments of the internal convulsions through which the Italy of the nineteenth century was to pass. Carducci, who was born in 1835, attained adolescence at the moment of Italy's greatest mental enthusiasm. His father, a Carbonaro of the old school, was a democrat and a Christian. In the Maremma, "where flowered his sad youth," the young Giosué worked out the most radical ideas. He wrote his first verse at the age of fourteen, when Mazzini was urging Rome to insurrection, and the young Giosué's verses sang of "the holy Republic." Already he was beginning to hate the authors which his father forced him to read; the mawkish Manzoni especially, and all the Romantics, vaguely tinged by Christianity of the same school. At the age of twenty, like so many young Italians of his generation, Carducci was a violent atheist and republican, the enemy of the Pope and of kings, and also of Austria, who was oppressing his native country; he was consequently a nationalist. Now these loves and hates existed, at that time, all but independently

of his cult for Latin literature, so that Carducci was necessarily a classic.

For Carducci and the group of young men of which he was a member during the harsh years of apprenticeship, and which audaciously styled itself the *amici pedanti*, romanticism, a foreign importation, coming from the North, from Germany, represented, in the intellectual order, the servitude which in the political order was imposed on the Latins by the *Tedeschi*, by the barbarian foreigners. To free Italy from foreign domination one must commence by liberating the Italian mind, by wresting it from the literary fashions imported from Germany, to lead it back to the Latin well-springs. Carducci was a classic because he was a patriot.

"Leave it," his earliest verses said, "leave it to groan and to weary its feeble sight in the contemplation of the wan planet, this scoundrelly abstemious family of the Romantics. On us, the Italic race, may they continue to smile, the gods of Latium, the mother of the *Aeneides* and the harmony of Horace. . . . Thy beautiful Apollo, O Flaccus, has fled the Latin land, giving place to Teutates and the monstrous Odin; now it is from the Germanic Alps, the frozen Alps, that the muses come to us, and this sorry band muddies the springs of Helicon."

It will be seen that the *amici pedanti* did not beat about the bush. They even pushed their literary nationalism so far as derisively to translate the names of the more famous of the foreign Romantics, calling Byron *Birone*, Lamartine *La Martina*, and Chateaubriand *Castelbriante*.

Carducci and his friends had another reason

for hating romanticism. They saw in it the token not only of foreign domination, but also of political reaction. As a matter of fact, the primitive romanticism, the movement which first of all assumed this name in Germany, was mystical and mediæval; these were the qualities which Heinrich Heine, no less than Goethe, detested in it. France also for a time (during the Restoration) was familiar with these "knights of whimpering Gothicism": *vide* the *Odes et ballades* of the legitimist Victor Hugo. The young Carducci attacked this literature with the hatred "of a Catiline." And just as his *Rime*, his first verses, were sprinkled with Latin quotations, with phrases, expressions, and images borrowed from antiquity, so his political ideas were echoes of Tacitus and Juvenal.

Carducci then applied himself to the skilful transposition into the Italian tongue of the metres of Latin poetry: a difficult task, which did much to train his talent, to break it in. But towards his thirtieth year we see in Carducci the completion of an extraordinary development. Unnoticed by him, romanticism had taken its revenge. It was a French romanticism—republican, anti-clerical, revolutionary. But it was none the less romanticism. Politics had played this trick with the literary doctrines of the poet. It was then that he wrote the famous *Hymn to Satan*, in which the Devil is represented as the principle of good, of progress and knowledge, etc.

"Hail, O Satan, O rebellion, avenging might of the human name! To thee let our incense and our prayers ascend! Thou hast overcome the Jehovah of the priests. . . ."

This provocative poem was to create a serious scandal throughout the whole of Italy. And the harshest criticism which Carducci received was that of an old Republican, who slyly objected :

“ If you want to celebrate Nature, the Universe, the great Whole, why call it Satan ? If it is not an abuse of words it is an intellectual orgy.”

And in truth it was. In the course of the curious “ Satanic polemics ” which followed the publication of the *Hymn*, Carducci had to confess his authorities and reveal his sources. Shame and misfortune ! The classic poet had been seduced by a revolutionary spirit into an impure romanticism ! It was from Michelet’s *Sorcière* that he had borrowed the idea, and some of the developments, of his riotous poem. The *Hymn to Satan* was written only a year later than *La Sorcière*.

Carducci had eaten of the fruit of romanticism. Michelet introduced him to Hugo. This was at the moment when the hopes of unification and the anti-clerical passions of the Italians were becoming exasperated, having nearly attained their goal. The France of those days, Napoleonic France, after showing young Italy the road to Rome, was defending Rome against the attempts of Garibaldi. With Carducci, who followed the course of events with anger, this was a period of extreme political fury. He forsook old Horace ; Hugo was more congenial to his sensitive condition. Thenceforth Carducci imitated *Les Châtiments*, and at times imitated them very closely. He hurled invectives against Pio Nono, Victor Emmanuel II, and Napoleon III in the



manner of the most famous pamphlet in verse of modern times. Images, methods, antitheses: the whole of *Les Châtiments* is to be found in the *Decennali*. The Revolution and the Republic had turned the classic poet into a *Vittor-bugiano*. And the process of romantic evolution was not to stop there: with amazement Carducci was observed to sacrifice to the "Cimbrian Apollo," to learn German, to translate and imitate the barbarians whom he had formerly so derided, to enter the school of Uhland, to set to work composing ballads. . . .

This was the aberration of a few years of feverish agitation. After 1870 and the taking of Rome, Carducci, whose revolutionary temperament always wanted to protest against something, had continued his violent opposition; the new Italy did not satisfy his idealism. Italy was monarchical, and he remained a republican. But the Government showed him every consideration, and insensibly the poet's inflexible disapproval of royalty was moderated. At the same time he returned to classicism; he escaped from Germany by way of Goethe, and recovered the paths of antiquity. His political evolution was simultaneous with this literary counter-evolution. In 1878 Carducci published his *Ode to the Queen*. This was an event. By personal homage to the wit and beauty of Queen Margherita the poet adroitly announced his adhesion to the monarchy. "Whence comest thou? What are the centuries that have sent thee to us, so fair and so kind? In which of the songs of the poets, where, O Queen, did I one day behold thee?" So sang the poet in his *Odi barbari*, which he so described,



as he modestly remarked, because the ancients would have called them barbaric.

Carducci lived twenty years longer, the poet of the new Italy, still a classic and a nationalist. He was the minstrel of Irredentism. Every patriot knows, and men are everywhere at this present moment repeating, the lines of the *Saluto italico* :

“ Oh ! toward the beautiful sea of Trieste, toward the mountains, toward the souls of the dead, fly, with the New Year, antique Italian verses ! . . . Salute, in the Gulf of Giustinopoli, the pearl of Istria, and the harbour with the green waters, and the lion of Muggia ! ” . . .

In 1893 Carducci definitely and explicitly expressed his adhesion to the monarchy. He had by this time even somewhat abated his ancient hatred of Catholicism. As a reply to a well-known poem in his *Odi*, which is full of blasphemy and sarcasm (*In a Gothic Cathedral*), he wrote a poem in connection with the restoration, by public subscription, of the church of Polenta—that in which Dante and Francesca had kneeled. And it was a universal surprise to read over the signature of the poet who had formerly bidden a resounding farewell to the *semitico nume* (to Jesus, the “ Semitic divinity ”) such touching lines as these :

“ Hail, little church ! O nation of manifold lives, O nation re-arisen, to this Mother, broken with age, restore the power of speech and of prayer !—Let us hear once again the warning of the bell ; may the belfry, re-arisen, pour forth upon the country-side, from hill to hill, the *Ave Maria*.”

But Carducci did not travel far in this direction. He underwent no religious conversion to match his political conversion. Yet how remote is this last note from the turbulent anticlericalism of his beginnings !

Thus we are able to follow, through the work of Carducci, the evolution and the metamorphosis of modern Italy. A poet, and in the ranks of the greatest, Carducci, by his difficult and lofty art, has interpreted the life, the feelings, and the experiences of a people.

. . . . .

Carducci was fitly called "the national poet of the Third Italy." He found a successor in this high vocation in Gabriele d'Annunzio.

We in France had learned something of his quality previously. Having come to settle in Paris a few years ago, a reception was organised in his honour, and a French man of letters, who was introduced to him, congratulated himself on meeting the foremost novelist of modern Italy. "I am worth still more as a poet," replied the author of *La Nave*, without the least false modesty. When posterity speaks of d'Annunzio it will, indeed, assuredly remember him first as poet, for it was as a poet that he achieved the great and final phase of his mission as man of letters. It is as a poet that he has most influenced the men in whose tongue he sings. And, by a natural reaction, it was as a poet that he himself was drawn into the life of action. We shall see later on how and as a result of what circumstances he inscribed his name upon one of the pages of Italian history which is of all least likely to be forgotten.

One may say that it was the lyrical spirit of Italy which breathed through those decisive days of the Roman May of 1915, and that in those days the poetry of d'Annunzio was realised.

A disciple of Carducci, his equal in the difficult technique of a complex and refined prosody, aspiring, like Carducci, to the summits of his art, Gabriele d'Annunzio, once again like Carducci, will appear to the future as a national poet. But he must be styled the national poet of the Fourth Italy; no longer the reviving Italy of the nineteenth century, but the great, powerful, and victorious Italy of the twentieth.

As always happens in such a case, the nationalist ideals which determined Italian intervention in 1915 had for a long time been in the air. Distributed under a score of different forms, to the measure of all temperaments and all imaginations, having acquired a considerable power of diffusion, it was their poetical expression which gave them their unity and their power of expansion, made them accessible to the great public, assured them of their advantage over the various conceptions—as, for example, those of socialism or democracy—which were simultaneously making a bid for men's minds. In this respect certain representations of the lyrical dramas of Signor d'Annunzio, by the unanimity and enthusiasm which were manifested on these occasions, might already be regarded as premonitory signs, as already marking the stages of progress. In 1915, at the voice of the poet, all the suggestions, images, and symbols transmitted from the intellectual aristocracy to the crowd rose up in men's minds to become invincible powers of sentiment.

*Vates*, poet, prophet, the aged Victor Hugo liked to say. Gabriele d'Annunzio will have been the prophet of the war of 1915. Who sang of it before the event, who foresaw and announced it as he did? Let us look about us: what French poet (I speak, of course, of poets of the same rank) had an equal intuition of the future, or produced anything like those forebodings of the future which are to be found on almost every page of his *Laudi*? It was he who, nearly ten years ago, heard the "roar of warfare" overpowering the roar of the workshops. It was he who, calling the youth of Italy to arms, proposed to it the programme of which 1915 was to witness the realisation. "For the conquest of this ideal programme, of the greater Italy, set forth and prepare yourselves. . . . There are many dawns which have not yet shone. . . ." His divination was even more precise: "The days draw near: let us prepare for the holy war"; so that more than one characteristic of the present war may be found recorded in these poems. "*Thy war, sacred Italy*," says an inaugural song; and the present war is "*Nostra guerra*."

Still more prophetically, perhaps (and many have been struck by the circumstance), Gabriele d'Annunzio announced the part which Victor Emmanuel III was called upon by destiny to play in the great historic phase through which we are now passing. The "Roman days" of 1915, which the poet was to control, were announced in the famous ode *To the young King*, and this prediction does not, like the "centuries" of a Nostradamus, consist of incoherent or sibylline statements, a tangle of obscure metaphors and



images, in which one may, if sufficiently ingenious, discover any meaning one pleases. Gabriele d'Annunzio confined himself to exact and penetrating inductions, when, saluting the advent of the new prince, he warned him, in high and solemn language, that his reign must witness great events, or else it would not be. Humbert I had just been assassinated, and the Prince of Naples was cruising, when the news of the crime which made him king was announced.

"O thou, young man, who, summoned by Death, hast come by the Sea, O thou who, elected by Death, hast been made king upon the Sea. . . . Destiny has chosen thee for the great audacious adventure. Take the bow, light the torches, strike, and light the way for us, O Latin hero! Open, to our courage, the gates of future empires!"

And then suddenly followed those verses in which, as in a sort of menace, we see the Roman people of 1915 "in tumult," awaiting the Royal word which was to deliver the nation from traitors and from the foreigner, and to set Italy upon the great Imperial highway.

*"For if the shame were to last, when the hour should sound, then close at hand among the rebellious thou wouldst behold in the front rank he who to-day salutes thee."*

Many Italians, sensitive to poetry and to prophecy, must have repeated these lines in the month of May, while the tempest of popular commotion seemed gathering over Rome.

"The holy war," said Gabriele d'Annunzio nearly ten years before it was due to break forth. It is the war whence Italy is to emerge greater



and more powerful, equal to her destinies, such as the patriots of the past beheld her in their dreams, those who died in the days of her modest beginnings, those who were destined to witness only the first stages of her growth, but who none the less had faith in her future, who in the seed perceived the tree. In this respect the war is for Italy the result of a hundred years of nationalist passions and ideals. It is the daughter of philosophy and literature, a conception created in common by all the noble minds and the high imaginations of a people. It was natural that Italy, awakened to self-consciousness by the book in which Gioberti, with a confidence almost mystical, revealed to her her "primacy," while she was yet in servitude, should still be guided by poetry on the day when she was to assert, in the face of the world, her rights and her duties as a great nation.

## CHAPTER IV

### ITALY IS NO LONGER THE COUNTRY OF THE DEAD

The scorn of the nineteenth century—Literary witchcraft—Italy wishes to “live her life”—From beyond the tombs—The forerunners—The intuition of Proudhon—First outlines of an Italian Imperialism—The dream of Victor Emmanuel II—Don Amadeo—Italian dynamism—The conservative nations and the progressive nations—The tendency of ideas before the war—“Futurism” and Nietzscheism—The new Nationalist party—The Cathedral of Reims—The Italian spirit and the war.

“In the end we become the slaves of the creatures which we have made.” This great saying of Goethe’s is especially true in the domain of imaginative life. Thus the French of the nineteenth century created for themselves a sort of mythological Europe, which was to have a powerful suggestive effect on their foreign policy. Afterwards, they experienced a serious difficulty in liberating themselves from this unreal world. Under the empire of literary recollections, the French had made of the majority of foreign peoples a seductive image, the arbitrary character of which yielded only with difficulty, and little by little, to the lessons of experience, so strongly were their progenitors attached to the children of their mind. In 1827 the French had just liberated the Greeks. And Admiral de Rigny

discovered "with an ever-increasing surprise," as his reports told, that modern Greece offered no resemblances to the Greece of Homer, Phidias, and Plato. Yet this was the Greece of which France had championed the cause. Similarly the image of a disinterested and idealistic Germany, which, according to Mme de Staël's expression, reserved to itself "the kingdom of the air," had not completely, even after 1870, given way to the harsher reality. In spite of the lessons of the present war, it is probable that some trace of the old illusions may still survive in the minds of a few Frenchmen.

The Italy for which France felt such enthusiasm in the nineteenth century, and for which she went to war in 1859, bore but a distant resemblance to the real Italy. Similarly, the Greece of Constantine I is not the Greece of the *Orientales*, nor is the Germany of Mme de Staël that of Prince Bismarck. The French who, under the monarchy of July, and under the second Republic, demanded intervention in favour of oppressed Italy, and subsequently acclaimed Napoleon III, who, obedient to the voice of the nations, was setting out for the battle-fields of Lombardy—these same Frenchmen would have been greatly astonished had they been told that the Italians desired that their country should eventually be something more than the land of art and beauty, the country where the orange-tree flowers amid noble ruins. What France did not then understand was that Italy wished "to live her own life." France had formed a romantic conception of an Italy which conceived herself in the most positive, realistic,

and practical spirit. The misconception was serious. Its result was to create a misunderstanding between the two countries which has lasted until our own days.

In vain did a few well-informed or clear-sighted persons wisely advise France as to her error. Marc Monnier wrote a book whose title alone gave an indication of its contents: *L'Italie est-elle la terre des Morts?* This was about 1860, when Italy was already a robust personality, full of the future, by no means addicted to loitering in cemeteries. Already Italy was "futurist." One might say that she had been so—setting aside all exaggeration, all deliberate intention of astonishing the *bourgeois*, all tendency to paradox—from the moment when she had first defined herself as a nation. Long before Signor Marinetti and his disciples had demanded, to the scandal of artists, that the canals of Venice should be filled, and the gondolas done away with; long before Signor d'Annunzio, in one of his Roman speeches, had exclaimed that Italy must be something more than a background to honeymoon journeys, Gioberti, the gentle mystic, had written in his *Primato* :

"What are we doing that is great and beautiful, we Italians? Where are our performances? Where are our fleets and colonies? What rank do our envoys occupy in the foreign Courts? What power, what influence have they? What weight does the name of Italy cast into the European balance? Do the foreigners yet know our peninsula, do they visit it yet, for any other reason than to rejoice in the immutable beauty



of its skies and to contemplate its ruins ? But who speaks of glory, of riches and power ? ”

Glory, riches, power—such were the aspirations of Italy at the moment when she was born into the political world, when she made her appearance in the society of nations. Thus, coming into the world, the child brings its need of growth, an irresistible force of development. Yet those abroad who believed themselves the friends of Italy had fixed the limits of her growth beforehand. They readily imagined that Italy would content herself with the sort of life they had dreamed of as hers—a noble, yet idle existence, a delicate *lazzaronism* amid the relics and the memories of antiquity and the Renaissance. It was vaguely supposed that picturesque Italy, when she had achieved unity, would form a democracy of artists and archæologists. This ridiculous dream was never Italy's. Was it for this that her patriots had so long hoped and suffered and striven ? To think so was to mistake the ardour of the blood which flowed through their veins. It was to plan the life of an old man for a young creature intoxicated with puberty.

All this had been realised with remarkable force by a man who had observed, without benevolence, and often in a spirit of frank hostility, the first steps of Italy. Proudhon wrote, in 1863:

“ France is a nation fatigued and uncertain of her principles, seeming to doubt her star. Italy, on the contrary, aroused from her long lethargy, seems to have all the fire and inspiration of youth. France longs for repose. . . . Italy asks only to go forward, no matter under what conditions, no matter under what system. Let a few men be



born to her—a Richelieu, a Colbert, a Condé—and in less than a generation . . . as a united State, she will take her place among the great Empires, and her influence in Europe may become formidable.”

Perhaps Italy has had no Richelieu, no Colbert, no Condé; Cavour and Victor Emmanuel were enough. In a few years, in less than a generation, Italy became a political, military, naval, and commercial power of the first rank. Suddenly she stood on a footing of equality with the great European States, and the “pentarchy” of the Old World became a “hexarchy” by the addition of the new kingdom. Even the word “Empire,” still new in the sense intended here, which had slipped from the pen of Proudhon—even this word, which then appeared extreme and inexact, soon displayed a tendency to become exact. “Italy will be imperialist,” said Proudhon. To become so she had only to follow her inclination.

Italy was barely created when her first King gave her a programme of action. “Italy is free and united,” he said, “Henceforth it depends on us alone to make her great and happy.” Thus Italy heard the call of life, submitted to the law of being. Her lot was very fair, almost un hoped for. She would not content herself with her lot. Already she abhorred stagnation, resignation, and mediocrity. Pope Nicolas V, who was a Florentine, used to say, if report speaks true, “that an Italian has no sooner obtained possession of a post than he already considers the means of attaining the post above it.” This is true of the Italian. It is also true of many others. It is true of any active man

until he has one leg in the grave. It is true of every nation until it is ripe for decadence.

Because he was descended from the petty seigneurs of Maurienne, because he had himself reigned only over Piedmont and Savoy, Victor Emmanuel II by no means felt obliged to content himself with the kingdom of Italy as it was in 1860, nor, in 1870, with that kingdom enlarged by the addition of Rome. He had even, like many of his faithful supporters and subjects, passed through a phase of premature ambition, of megalomania if you will, which was quickly corrected by his commonsense and tempered by reality.

The Italians have remembered, as a kind of promise, as an invitation to fortune, the saying of Colonel Marselli: "The destinies of Italy summon her one day to be the England of the South." Of her great rôle in the Mediterranean Victor Emmanuel had an intuition even before Rome had become his capital. Hardly was he king of the new Italy, when he began to dream of extending the influence of Italy beyond her frontiers, of making the Mediterranean a species of Italian lake—*mare nostrum*—by means of a sort of family pact borrowed from the French monarchy, and imitated from the Bourbons. The Germans have shown us since then, more especially in the East, what can be done by the rational exploitation of dynastic alliances. In 1867 the Spanish throne had fallen vacant. Victor Emmanuel did not hesitate to urge his son Amadeo to put himself forward as candidate, and so "Don Amadeo" became king of Spain—like the Duc d'Anjou, and the grandson of Louis XIV

before him. And a Princess of Savoy, Maria Pia, married to King Louis, was Queen of Portugal. Through his son Victor Emmanuel thought to be master in Madrid. Through his daughter his influence might predominate in Lisbon. Already vast plans were attributed to him, a complete and audacious policy, of which the goal would have been the unification of the Iberian peninsula under the sceptre of a prince of the House of Savoy, as he himself had accomplished the unification of the Italian peninsula. But in spite of the advice and encouragement of his father, "Don Amadeo," after a reign of three years, which were three years of tribulations, returned, full of bitterness, to his own country, resuming his name and title as a Prince of Piedmont; resuming, too, with profound relief, his independence. It was he who, on abandoning the throne of Spain, exchanged the Escorial for a simple furnished apartment in the "Fonda de Paris," whence he sent his father this historic telegram, which so greatly amused Europe: "All is over, will write; Amadeo." This was a check for the young Italian monarchy. But, following the House of Savoy, the Hohenzollerns, tempted by the example of the Habsburgs and the Bourbons, were in turn to aspire to the Spanish throne. On leaving Spain Don Amadeo, who had no suspicion of the fact, was leaving behind him the cause of the war of 1870, the beginning of a conflict by the issue of which the face of Europe was to be transformed. Such are the abysmal surprises which yawn at every step in the domains of politics and history.

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It has not been sufficiently remarked that the year 1870 had almost the same significance and the same importance for Italy as for Germany. For each country it was a historic moment of equal value, in that it marked the accomplishment, the last stage, of its unification.

The comparison between Prussia and Piedmont was for a long time perfect. What one aspired to do in the peninsula, the other aspired to do in the Germanic Confederation. Moreover, in respect of France their position was the same; it is natural, therefore, that their policies should have joined issue, and that the alliance between Prussia and Piedmont, concluded in 1866, should have become an alliance between Italy and Germany after 1870. It was a phenomenon which was based on potent historical causes. Having, up to the date of Sadowa, left Bismarck a free hand in Germany, Napoleon then effected a sudden change of front and made approaches to Austria. After taking up arms for the cause of Italian unity in 1859 he sought to impose limits upon the process of unification. He barred the road to Rome after pointing the way thither. Once the Empire had fallen, and France was defeated, Germany and Italy were to obtain that which had been forbidden to them so long as France was strong enough to enforce her veto. Italy might regard as null and void the famous convention of September, and might seize upon Rome (there are still aged Romans living who remember to have seen "the Italians," as they ingenuously call them, entering the city), while the King of Prussia was making ready to proclaim the German Empire. In the course of



the years that followed Germany and Italy were to show themselves equally anxious not to allow French influence to make itself felt in their domestic affairs. And in these countries this desire survived the defeat of France. Yet France entertained barely a thought of meddling with the life of her neighbours ; and had she cherished the intention the means would have been lacking. Italy continued to regard an unwelcome intervention of France in the matter of Rome as possible, and for a long while this apprehension guided her foreign policy. Similarly, Bismarck long feared, or feigned to fear, lest France should become a rallying-point for the particularist, and, as he called them, the "centrifugal" elements which might still be encountered in the interior of the new German Empire. Cunningly exploited, these apprehensions were in great measure to serve in transforming the occasional alliance of 1866 into a more comprehensive system, that of the Triple Alliance, German and Italian unity being regarded each as guaranteeing the other. This historical phase must be kept in view ; there will always be men, in Italy as in Germany, in certain eventualities of the future, who will evoke it anew and seek to restore it to its old significance.

Thus Germany and Italy, in the nineteenth century, had similar points of departure ; their positions were similar ; and they passed through similar vicissitudes. Italian unity was accomplished by means of the same ideals and the same methods (or very nearly the same) as those by which the unity of Germany was established. Piedmont had filled in Italy the part which



Prussia had occupied in the German world. Despite many slight variations, of which we must not lose sight, Cavour and Bismarck, Wilhelm I and Victor Emmanuel II, the Italian patriots and the German intellectuals, had fulfilled the same function and were actuated by the same desire: that of constituting great nations and powerful States where there had so far been only division, dispersion, and weakness. The state of men's minds and the general trend of ideas were the same, so long as it was a question of attaining the goal. When that was attained was it not natural that the same identity of thoughts and feelings should continue? Each with her peculiar genius, Germany and Italy, unified at last, were youthful Powers with all the needs and appetites and desires of youth. The peoples, who are almost immortal, do not experience, as is too often believed, the same sequence of ages and the same decline as man, but a succession of winters and springs. In a Europe in which the great nations were either exhausted or replete, after a century of expansion and conquest, Germany and Italy came forward with blood renewed, with fresh energies and ambitions. They were equally eager to grow, to dominate, to enrich themselves: the society of nations has its Rastignacs, just as the society of human beings, and what nation has not been, or will not be, Rastignac in its turn? France and England were inclined to retire, having made their fortunes. They had become conservative, and, thenceforth, timid. Germany and Italy had their fortunes to make. This again was bound to develop common characteristics in the two nations.

The reader must not misunderstand our argument. We know how greatly civilisation and race differ in the two countries. We know the limits of this parallel. But numerous Italians, in the intellectual world, do not hesitate to admit the comparison in so far as it is just and honourable. Germany has disgraced herself by her uncouthness, her savagery, her contempt for the law of nations and the traditions of public morality. But no one would deny that she has afforded, during the last fifty years, a wonderful example of tenacious labour and effort and sacrifice, even though it has been in a bad cause. With more wisdom, more balance, the qualities she has displayed might have assured her of that hegemony, that domination of which she has dreamed, and which, by her very excess of brutal infatuation, she has missed. Italy, most assuredly, has displayed more taste, moderation, discretion, and tact in the quest of power and greatness. But that which in the depths of her nature invincibly impelled her to become a military, naval, colonial, and industrial power was the same instinct which was at the same time actuating Germany. The same dynamic forces were at work in either case. The same "will to power" was revealed by either nation. We will not speak of the new Balkan nationalities, which are so turbulent, and whose evolution is yet so imperfect and their destiny so uncertain: but where in Europe, in the last forty years, has there been displayed, in the domain of high politics, more imagination, more enterprise, more love of novelty, movement, and conflict than in Germany and Italy? What nations have so

acutely felt the need to find employment for their energies? What nations have thought more of the future, and have more readily conceived of alterations of the map of Europe and of territorial aggrandisement? No one can hesitate as to the reply to this question. And one is finally inclined to suggest that Germany and Italy, precisely because they commenced in the same manner, because they were driven by the same needs, were bound one day, by a sort of necessity, to find themselves in opposing camps, for their aspirations and their profounder sentiments, being similar, were necessarily incompatible, and were bound, in the end, to clash.

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Nevertheless, by a curious phenomenon, this Nationalist or Imperialist frame of mind (to-day the two terms are indifferently employed), which was involved in the very origins of the new Italy, was for a long time to pass unperceived by the eyes of contemporaries. More attentive to the manifestations of Italy's public life than to the tendencies of her profounder self, foreigners, and often enough the Italians themselves, allowed themselves to be deceived by the appearances of political institutions and manners. Italy had followed the fashion in the matter of a Parliamentary government. It needed only a step to conclude that the whole Italian mind was expressed by the elections and by Parliament. Yet the Chamber alone, and the opinions then represented (although universal suffrage did two years ago to a certain extent renew the atmosphere therein) were far from yielding a truthful image

on the complete moral and intellectual physiognomy of the country.

In the course of the years immediately preceding the European war the observer who contented himself by recording the tendencies of the electoral body and the composition of the majorities—not only at Montecitorio and the Palais Bourbon, but also in the House of Commons and the Reichstag—would inevitably have concluded that an armed conflict was impossible. Whether a radical socialist, as in France, or a clerical, as in Belgium, the elector demanded peace, tranquillity, the improvement of his conditions, and an increasing share in the national wealth. Yet the observer who confined himself to these symptoms would have committed a stupendous error, because these symptoms were insufficient and superficial. There were, almost everywhere, forces and elements which, while they found but an imperfect expression in Parliament or among the electorate, none the less exerted, unknown to the majority, a considerable influence over the life of the nations. Even in France, where the democracy had achieved complete domination, two superimposed currents might be distinguished ; that of internal politics, which was making for a diminished effort and progressive disarmament, and that of foreign politics, which, by means of the Triple Entente, and the alliances with England and Russia, was making for resistance, and consequently for a collision with Germany. This essential contradiction will perhaps impress posterity more than it has impressed us. Later on, perhaps, men will see in the pacifist movement of the years which



preceded the conflict something like an obscure and instinctive reaction. The imminence of the catastrophe made some aspire for an international *entente* of the peoples, and this desire was the more extreme as it appeared capable of realisation and more plainly contradicted by events. Thus the periods which are distinguished by dreams of humanitarian fraternity and effusions of tenderness among the citizens of the same country precede, with remarkable regularity, atrocious intestine struggles and worse than civil wars.

We do not believe that the electoral consultation of the autumn of 1913, in which, for the first time, all Italians took part without distinction of fortune or education, could have given anyone a positive indication of the attitude which Italy would adopt in the event of a European conflict. One knew that Signor Giolitti had presided over these elections, and one supposed that by virtue of his omnipotence in the administrative and political life of Italy he had formed this Parliament, the result of universal suffrage, in his own image, as readily, perhaps, as he had previously formed the Parliaments elected by the limited suffrage. And in truth, as we shall see, the Chamber, in May 1915, was very near supporting Signor Giolitti, very near enabling him to keep Italy neutral. That it did not do so was due to the fact that elements came into play which were alien to political life.

For some years there had appeared in Italy schools of literature, philosophy, or politics, which were hardly taken seriously, on account of their eccentric character, or were regarded merely as curiosities, if not as examples of mental deformity.

But the public was wrong ; they should at least have been regarded as symptoms. Without going so far as to maintain that paradox alone is fruitful, and that it always represents the truth of to-morrow (for the complete history of paradoxical opinions would be only too likely to prove the apotheosis of the commonplace), we should beware of giving our attention only to accepted ideas. It is a middle-class prejudice, an academic conception, which attributes influence and value only to official doctrines, those which are triumphant in the academies and parliaments, while the reprobated doctrines are kept in a sort of ideological quarantine, at the other extremity of the intellectual world.

“Futurism,” in Italy, was one of these doctrines. Nationalism was another. And we cannot swear that the adepts of these schools of thought, who pass, in the eyes of people of common-sense, for mystificators or enthusiasts, have not sometimes yielded to the temptation of amazing the *bourgeois* and annoying the Philistine. This is a defect, a vice, which appears in the origins of all youthful schools ; and the “futurists” have been greatly addicted to it. But behind the very real extravagances of these painters and literary men we find a guiding idea which responds to a profound instinct of the new Italy. Their blasphemies have given offence, and this offence seems to some extent to have entered into their calculations. But when they proclaimed the necessity of shaking off the servitude of the past, what were they doing but expressing, in an extremer fashion, the feeling already interpreted by Gioberti ? The “futurists” laid the foundation

of their rackets reputation by asserting that it was essential, for the good of Italy, to destroy her museums and libraries. Their leader and theorist, Signor F. T. Marinetti, one day "dedicated the ruins of Rome to the earthquake." He has celebrated the "increasing triumph of the Machine," and the beauty of factories and blast-furnaces, which is greater than that of classical landscapes. He has derided Pegasus and sung the aeroplane. . . . This negation of art, this revolt against antiquity—what was it, at bottom, but an exaggerated image, distorted by literature, of one of the keenest aspirations and ambitions of modern Italy? for Italy herself has desired to become a great industrial nation, to gaze with pride on the smoking chimneys of her factories. The "futurists" conceived a violent disdain for Signor Gabriele d'Annunzio. They reproached him with having cultivated "the morbid and nostalgic poetry of memory and remoteness." In short, Signor d'Annunzio was reckoned by them—and this was the supreme insult—as one of the "passists." However, the time was to come when they were forced to applaud him, and to recognise themselves in his words. It is true that this was when all modern Italy was doing so. It was on one of those almost revolutionary nights of May 1915 when 150,000 Romans received from the poet's lips the watchword, the call to action. And in the city of tourists, the "cosmopolis" of Europe, the following words were acclaimed: "No, we are not, we will not be a museum, a hotel, a holiday resort, a horizon painted in Prussian blue for international honeymoons." Perhaps nothing will be left of

“futurism” beyond these words and that evening. But by that very fact “futurism” will have proved that it had more to do than appeared with the development, the direction, and the instinct of the “fourth Italy.”

What must before all else have struck the true observer—he who neglects nothing—was the fact that this school, which seduced or at least interested a section of Italian youth by invoking the future, was teaching precisely the opposite of that which is known and usually propagated as the progressive doctrine. Far from representing the future in such colours as the last two centuries would have seen it in, the “futurists” could not be sufficiently sarcastic at the expense of the philosophy of the French Encyclopædists and the men of 1789. They disdained it and abused it as violently as they did Christianity. Both, in their eyes, were things of the past; in their jargon, they were “pastism.” As for the conception of a universal and perpetual peace, marking the end of the bloodthirsty instincts of humanity, they rejected it with disgust. What they demanded in their prayers was war, “the world’s only hygiene.” They addressed their hymns to Trieste, “our beautiful powder-magazine,” which was destined to blow up the opportunist policy—that cowardice, as they called it. They demanded at the tops of their voices that Italy should attack Austria. Long before the hour struck they were summoning the monarchy to “consolidate the national pride by preparing for war.” Finally they exalted patriotism, a warlike spirit, and contempt for death, deriding international pacifism. And all



this was done defiantly, in a mood of excess, in the spirit of a literary clique. Yet we can but admit, with astonishment, that here again these enthusiastic theorists, more noisy than influential, were after all in agreement with the most powerful tendencies of their country and their time. Since then, moreover, the young "futurist" artists have enthusiastically hailed the desired war, the war achieved in spite of the resistance of certain of those "passist" forces which they had opposed. And they left in a body for the front. They had willed the war; their will was accomplished. In the mysterious elaboration of popular movements such as that through which Italy has passed, who can ever define the precise share of each man or each ideal?

By the "futurists" Nietzsche was despised and loudly rejected. They hated the German philosopher in him. Moreover, what reputation did they not assassinate? However, they most certainly absorbed something of the Nietzschean spirit and the Nietzschean paradox, and that of the least refined quality. The Germanic world was also and at the same time invaded by these uncouth and rudimentary adaptations of the Nietzschean philosophy, reduced to the shibboleth of the "superman," the injunction "let us be hard," the justification of "master-morality," and the criticism of pity. And here again is something like a strange affinity between Italy and Germany.

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There is one party which recognises this affinity, is not ashamed of it, is perhaps even proud that Italy displays it. This is the Nation-

alist party. And it is also one of those parties which did most to impel Italy to participate in the European conflict and to break with the Germanic Powers. This is the party which has continually contended that the Italian war should enjoy the greatest possible extension, and it understood from the first that by limiting itself to the redemption of the *terre irredente* the war would lose the greater part of its *raison d'être*; firstly, because it was not worth while to go forth to conquer, weapon in hand, that which Austria was offering of her own accord, and secondly, because such conquests as Italy might achieve, were Trieste to fall into her hands, would remain precarious so long as Germany and Austria, being undefeated, still possessed the means to annul them. The adversaries of Germany—very consciously and warily the adversaries, having been the first to denounce the progressive and surreptitious encroachments of the Germans in the Peninsula, and the domination which they looked to exercise over Italy under cover of an Alliance, by means of Parliamentary politics and the influence of banking circles—the Italian nationalists none the less do not conceal the fact that they admire the military preparedness and organisation of Germany, and have a certain liking for her institutions. Moreover, they like to recognise some of their own sentiments in the passion for conquest, self-enrichment, and development which characterises the German Empire, together with its force of expansion, its spirit of enterprise, and its constructive imagination. The principal organ of the Nationalists, the *Idea nazionale*, published in Rome, has not

hesitated on many an occasion to stimulate the Italian's *amour propre* by setting Germany and Italy side by side as representing, for the same reasons, the will to live and effectual politics in the society of the nations of to-day; France and England, desirous of repose, fixed in an attitude of conservation and defence, and exposed to aggression, being upheld as the models to be avoided by a nation which has not yet gained the "place in the sun" which should complete its career. The nationalists are very far from admiring everything in Germany. They are severe judges of her spirit, her culture, and those repugnant and irritating qualities which Germanism always possesses for the Latins. But one feels that they divine, in its very harshness and uncouthness, some of the virtues which they have most highly recommended to the Italian people. And it is precisely for this reason that they wish to fight the German Empire. They are pitiless logicians, coldly realistic, true pupils of the real Machiavelli: by virtue of their resemblances, Germany and Italy appear to them as inevitable rivals, both having had the same point of departure, having followed the same course of evolution, having also the same aims, the same aspirations to greatness and Empire. There are other countries in which the admiration of the German strength has degenerated into servility. The nationalists leave this degrading attitude to weak, timid States devoid of pride. Their fundamental thought is perhaps that if the Germans, according to Mr. Balfour's fine saying, have been unable to use the power which they have created, other peoples will succeed

in recovering their secret, and with wisdom and moderation will derive a greater benefit from it, will make a wider use of it.

The Nationalist party is of recent date. Its beginnings—its very small, very humble beginnings—do not date back before the first years of the twentieth century. Those who created it, who launched it, were merely a handful of literary men and intellectuals. Their fundamental originality consisted in distinguishing themselves from the Italian patriots of the old school, which was kneaded of republican, liberal, and democratic elements. They commenced by a criticism of democracy and of Garibaldism. Anticlericalism they rejected, for philosophical and political reasons. For this work of elaboration and construction, they successfully adapted many of the elements borrowed from the political literature of France. They had studied Maurice Barrès, Charles Maurras, and Georges Sorel. They were familiar with the ideas of *L'Action française*, and as one of their best writers—Signor Francesco Coppola—has remarked, French nationalism and Italian nationalism have on the whole followed “parallel lines.” So, little by little, a doctrine emerged which obviously responded to the needs of Italy, since this is the doctrine which finally imposed itself on the people, and which guided public opinion by rallying the directing *élites* in May 1915.

“The whole of Italy is very far from being Nationalist in the sense in which we understand the term,” one of the leaders of the movement at that time informed me. “But it is penetrated by our ideas to a greater extent than it realises ;



perhaps to a greater extent than we ourselves suppose." Nationalism has developed with extraordinary rapidity. Ten years ago the same sofa could almost have contained its disciples. In the summer of 1913, being in Rome, we noticed the *Idea nazionale* in the form of a modest weekly. Eighteen months later we found it had 100,000 readers, the successful competitor of the greatest Roman newspapers; the war had made electrical contact between the intellectuals and the crowd. But even before the great European clash the nationalist doctrines had made immense strides by virtue of the expedition to Tripoli, which marked Italy's entrance upon a period of political expansion. At the last general elections—which were an experiment, a trial of universal suffrage—one of the most prominent contributors to the *Idea nazionale*, Signor Federzoni, was elected by one of the Roman colleges. For these adversaries of the Parliamentary system did not hesitate to solicit the suffrages of the citizens in order to enter Parliament. This was in order that they might get better acquainted with the enemy and keep a closer watch upon him.

It will probably happen that Italian Nationalism will undergo transformation by the way: nearly all political conceptions destined to succeed have known such avatars. As its heroic and primitive period grows remoter it will shed the asperities of its doctrine. Already it has begun to do so, and is thereby only becoming more popular. It has so well responded, during the last few years, to the tendencies of the nation, it has so clearly interpreted what were merely fleeting aspirations

and obscure desires, that it cannot fail to have a future. Henceforth it must be reckoned with.

What a lesson to those politicians who believe that they and their formulæ are assured of an uninterrupted domination! Far removed from power, from the Ministries, from the vital centres of the State, a few young men who were thinkers, who were drawn together by the same ideas, who discussed them and worked them out in common, were preparing, in their despised obscurity, a renewal of the face of things. The spirit of the times was in them, was inspiring them. It was thus with the party which proudly styled itself the *Junimiste* party (the party of youth) in Roumania. The adventure has been repeated a hundred times in the history of mankind. Thus Gambetta, still a student, loitering of a Sunday in the roadside inns, while Napoleon III passed by on his way to Compiègne, never dreaming of the man who was to overthrow the Empire.

But it is important to recollect that Italy is a country in which the appearance of sudden and profound currents of public opinion is still possible. That atony, that indifference, that prudence which we have witnessed for so long in France do not yet prevail everywhere. The Italian people has not been crushed by bureaucratic tyranny, by the oppressive mechanism of a centralised administration. The Italian people—the people, that is, of the great cities—has remained capable of spontaneous reactions. It is not inclined to put up with anything. From many points of view it reminds the observer of the France of the Restoration and Louis-Philippe; like that France it is capable of revolt and upheaval. But its

energies of innovation are applied to very different objects. We find that it is, as a whole, by no means in favour of the old conceptions of liberalism; these no longer appeal to its imagination; they are things of yesterday, a part and parcel of the past; they represent, in a less concrete form, those noble burial-places, those whited sepulchres which weighed upon it and from which it longed to free itself. Italy—like Germany—had had her internal revolutions in the nineteenth century. They have left behind them a certain effervescence, a need of action. As her energies have increased tenfold since her unity was achieved, they have tended to find development and employment beyond her frontiers. The revolutionary and nationalistic energies of the Italian people were bound to lead it into great external adventures. Italy has but lately entered boldly upon her new path, and everything tends to show that it will be a long time before she learns to press forward in this direction.

It is especially important to obtain a thorough knowledge and understanding of the spirit of modern Italy. In the summer of 1915 I went to see a well-known writer on art who lives in one of the larger Italian cities. As we were speaking of Reims and the destruction of the cathedral by the Germans I asked him if so many acts of vandalism had not produced a great feeling of indignation among the Italians, and if this had not been one of the factors which determined them to intervene.

“Don’t let us confuse things,” he said. “Of course I do not regard the pretext invoked by the Germans for destroying the cathedral as

having any real foundation. But as a general thing, I, who am an archæologist, who live, by my profession, amid the monuments of the past, I think one has the right to fire projectiles against all the cathedrals in the world from the moment a military interest is at stake, and I think the ruin of no matter what masterpiece would be preferable to the death, even the possible death, of a single soldier of my own country."

I recollect the calm, self-possessed, natural tone of voice in which this profession of faith was made by an Italian who was neither a "futurist" nor a "nationalist." I regarded it as an expression of that new Italy, hard and utilitarian, which must henceforth supplant in our mind the old romantic Italy, which has departed to join the dust of dead things!

We cannot better terminate this chapter than by appending this curious passage, quoted from the review *Critica*, and signed by Signor Benedetto Croce, the most influential philosopher of modern Italy. It would be easy to put a name to those philosophers of other countries to whom Signor Croce makes such hard and contemptuous allusion :

"When I read the pamphlets and articles which reach me from the Allied countries, and especially from France, and when I see, opposed to the effective demonstration of the military power of Germany, hollow theories concerning the democratic ideal and the reign of peace and justice ; when I hear the Russian Sazonov himself replying to the taking of Warsaw by upbraiding 'the abominable theory of force,' a great melancholy



invades me, because it seems to me that here are signs of weakness, or at least a sign that the minds of men of the Latin and Slav countries are not equal to the events which are coming to pass. Would it be so difficult simply to say :

“ ‘ We Italians (or French, or English, or Russians) are Italians (or Frenchmen or Englishmen, or Russians), and since the course of events has drawn Europe into war we shall fight to the last and shall make all sacrifices for our country, come what may. This is the only thing that matters to-day, and we do not want to know about anything else.’—Is there any philosophy finer and truer than this? Is it necessary to embellish it by theoretical and historical nonsense? I think I can hear Gargano retort: ‘ Yes, since this nonsense responds to a need of the peoples at war.’ And this is obviously the case, for everything that happens responds to a need, even the lying, the stammering, and the cribbing of the schoolboy who has not learned his lesson. But one cannot thereby deduce the proposition that it is desirable to increase the prevalence of such foolery. As for me, I am not made for this sort of thing, and I deplore the fact that in other countries my philosophical colleagues have undertaken such a task when it would have been more fitting to keep silence. ‘ But you must at least feel the need of refuting, for the benefit of all, what you qualify as foolery.’ That is what I am doing, but with discretion, because, as I have said, this is not the moment for schoolmasters. There are other things to do: we have got to be victorious for the sake of Italy. And he who cannot co-operate directly in our

victory does better to apply himself to the tasks of ordinary every-day life, as the Germans have done and are doing : on the one hand, in prevision of what will come after the war ; and on the other hand, out of national pride, so that it may not seem that the war has made everybody lose his head."

In point of celebrity and wide diffusion, "Crocism," in Italy, may be compared with "Bergsonism" in France. The philosophy of Signor Benedetto Croce, by the way, is influenced by that of Hegel. It is curious to remark that the University of Naples, where Signor Croce is professor, has long been a citadel of Hegelianism. Many Italians even attribute to this circumstance the Teutonic preferences of which a section of the Neapolitan *élite* is accused.

## CHAPTER V

### THE QUIRINAL AND THE VATICAN

The two Queens—The Duchessa d' Aosta—A significant betrothal—A "King Deadweight"—Victor Emmanuel III and the Republicans—Universal suffrage—The crisis of the Masonic idea—The Italian monarchy and the Papacy—Coexistence of the two Powers—The Latapie incident—Germany and the Holy See—An ingenuous symbol—A prophecy concerning the Italian Empire—The expiring Revolution.

DURING the imposing demonstrations which took place in Rome last May, in favour of the war, the procession of demonstrators, passing one evening down the Via Boncompagni, had to pass before Queen Margherita's palace. All heads were bared, and acclamations arose from the street, which the Roman crowd, with its usual dignity and courtesy, took care not to make too noisy; acclamations which expressed both deference and admiration. For no one in Rome was ignorant of the fact that from the first day of the European conflict the Queen-Mother's feelings had been those of a woman who shrank from the crimes committed against the weak and against morality, and those too of a great Italian patriot, the widow and the mother of a king.

On Queen Margherita's writing-table, I am

told, is to be seen a touching and symbolical picture. It is a picture-postcard of the usual type, the reproduction of a photograph which appeared some months ago in an illustrated paper. This photograph represents King Albert of Belgium and Queen Elizabeth, alone, on a deserted beach near Nieuport, in that corner of the kingdom which the supreme resistance of the Belgian Army has succeeded in preserving undefiled by the foot of the invader. The whole tragedy of these noble sovereigns and of Belgium is expressed by this picture, which reminds one of a scene from Shakespeare. And the place of honour which this modest print has found on the Queen's table in itself reveals the sympathies of a great heart, and interprets the verdict pronounced by a royal conscience upon the crimes of Germany.

Everyone in Italy knows, and it is only right that everyone in France should know, that the judgment which Queen Margherita has formed upon the European war was formed upon the very day of the German aggression: that, on one of the summits of Italian society, in a palace whence radiates a lofty moral and intellectual influence, there has been, since the August of 1914, a rallying-point, a landmark of direction. Anyone who is aware of the multiplicity of causes on which the great events of history depend, the manner in which great national movements are created, and the mutual interaction of the opinions of the *élite* and the opinions of the crowd, will readily realise the important part which the *salon* of the Queen-Mother has played in determining the decision of Italy.

Not that Queen Margherita has ever derogated



from her proud reserve, or attempted to bring any pressure to bear upon anyone. From what one might call the constitutional point of view her attitude has displayed a dignity and discretion which Prince von Bülow miscalculated when he attempted to promote the German cause in the Palazzo Margherita itself. It was on this occasion that the widow of Humbert I proudly informed him : " In the House of Savoy only one person reigns at a time."

This was a particularly telling remark, being made, as it was, when the King, in agreement with his ministers, was about to take the supreme decision ; when German intrigues were pressing upon Italy, making her feel the weight of the foreign yoke. On the great evening of the 13th of May Gabriele d' Annunzio, addressing the crowd, repeated this fine saying of the Queen's. With his eloquence and his lyrical force he brought out its full national quality. More, he drew from it a poetical commentary which aroused enthusiastic acclamations. The Hôtel Regina, from whose balcony he was speaking, is not far from the Palazzo Margherita. And the Roman newspapers of the following day related that the form of a woman had been seen behind one of the windows of the Palace—that of the Queen-Mother herself—who was listening to the voice of the Italian people yet again acclaiming the war of liberation.

The war which the Italian people desired, upon which it has entered of its own free will, is in fact the sequel to the wars of the nineteenth century, the wars of independence, the wars in which, from the days of Carlo Alberto, the people

has always been led by the princes of the House of Savoy. The war undertaken by Italy in 1915, in which it has Victor Emmanuel III at its head, is in this sense a war of a profoundly traditional character. And the Italian traditions, commingled with the traditions of the House of Savoy, have been absorbed by Queen Margherita with her breath, since first she came into the world. The daughter of the Duke of Genoa naturally thinks and feels in accordance with the principles of the royal and warlike family which founded Italy.

All travellers who have passed through Turin know the statue, so curiously posed, which represents the Duke of Genoa at the battle of Novara, pointing to the enemy with his sword, while his horse founders under him. This soldier-prince died before he could witness the noble revenge which destiny had in store for Italy. But his spirit lives again in his daughter, who sees at this moment, with profound pride, the accomplishment of the supreme desire of the princes of her race, the completion of the work to which Italy has applied and devoted herself. On the walls of the hospital which she gave to the nation for the Italian wounded Queen Margherita has had inscribed certain maxims which she herself has composed. One of these maxims runs : " Blest are the Italian soldiers ! By their heroism the dream of old has become a reality." The idea of the war of 1915, the dream of old, the hope which has grown to fruition through many generations, suggested by great memories and great examples, first, perhaps, assumed its most definite shape and consciousness in the mind and heart of this Queen,

twice a member of the House of Savoy, through her father and through her husband.

Quite recently, in the Queen-Mother's *salon*, when there was speech—as how should there not be?—of the campaign against Austria, someone suggested that the King was perhaps exposing himself rather too perilously. It was a senator who expressed this fear, for at the age attained before one became a senator one is usually prudent. But Queen Margherita at once replied gently but firmly :

“If the King were to act otherwise he would not be a King.”

And these are the feelings which animate the whole of the Italian royal family : Queen Elena has a heart no less heroic than the Queen-Mother's.

What the Queen's feelings have been since the outbreak of the European war may be imagined when we remember that she was born a Princess of Montenegro. Yonder, for long months, in the indomitable Tchernagora, her brothers fought at the head of their mountaineers, for the great European cause. With what thoughts Queen Elena followed the vicissitudes of this struggle, and with what joy she saw Italy enter into line with the rest of the Allies, it is easy to imagine. As for the opinions which prevail in her *entourage*, it is enough to say that one of her ladies of honour, Princess Viggiano, is by birth a Beaufremont, the daughter of a great and noble line of illustrious French soldiers.

Did not a peculiar destiny preside over and smile upon the happy marriage of the Princess Elena and the Prince of Naples—a marriage dictated by the choice of two hearts ? Was not

this marriage of inclination approved by the frigid science of politics ? Did it not even then symbolise, as a striking proof of Italy's Slav sympathies, the future *rapprochement* between Italy and the Russian Empire ? It will be remembered that the interview of Victor Emmanuel III and Nicolas II at Racconigi was one of the prolegomena of the Quadruple Entente. Who knows but that the links of this chain were forged at Cettinje ? Who can say whether the betrothal of 1896 did not announce the alliance of 1916 ?

An admirable wife and mother, Queen Elena avoids politics as she avoids the glitter of courts. In the House of Savoy she found and continued a tradition of simplicity. But if she has never sought to impose her opinions, she has never made a mystery of them. A great-hearted queen, years ago, during the earthquake of Messina, whither she hastened in despite of danger, she restored the courage of the unfortunate by words of profound intuition. To-day she is able at once to lament the miseries of the war and to exalt the sacrifice of the soldier. And when the perils incurred by the princes are discussed in her hearing, Queen Elena has only one reply :

" I regret that my son was not of an age to go to the front."

. . . . .

For the decisive act of its national life which the Italian people has just accomplished, antecedents were necessary, a period of preparation, and outstanding pinnacles of moral support. Of this the people is aware ; and understanding this, it does not forget to associate with its manifestations the two Queens whose sentiments have



been those of the people since the first day of the war. History is well aware of the influence of women in the great events of the world ; aware of all that the radiancy of their hearts may effect, even when they most jealously stand aside from the operations of diplomacy, and when they are least desirous of playing a political part. Thus, without realising it, without wishing it, simply because they are the two foremost Italian women and because their minds at once reverted to that which was great and noble, Queen Margherita and Queen Elena have had no little share in all that Italy has willed. They acted without words. This is the wonderful mystery of influence, of moral authority, which, at the given moment, finds work to be done.

France should know as Italy knows what part of the rightful cause is owing to the two Queens. But it is pleasant that we may add to their names that of a princess of the House of France. An Italian by her marriage, the Duchess Hélène d' Aosta has devoted herself heart and soul to the Italian Red Cross. She has hurried hither and thither, visiting the hospital organisations without regard to her health, without taking a moment's repose. Her eldest son went to the front ; she would not prevent him, despite his youth. Destiny made hers a fruitful alliance : as Italy, through her Queen, gave a hand to the Slav Orient, so, through the Duchess d' Aosta, she gave a hand to France. Indeed, in speaking the name of this princess we can but recall the prophetic poem which d' Annunzio dedicated to her more than two years ago : " O Helen, who on the brow of our dead seest imprinted the

virtue of Rome—for the great Latin pact thou bearest this day—the augural vervein in thy hair.”

While the renewal of the Franco-Italian friendship is still radiant, it is only just to remember the great hearts and the noble women, the eager crowds and the poets who prepared the way for it. But let us also remember that it never could have taken place had one man desired the contrary. And this one man was the King.

The example of Bulgaria, Roumania, and Greece has shown us that the sympathy of the peoples for the cause of France was not always a sufficient motive to make their Governments support it. The affirmative pronounced by Victor Emmanuel III was thus of no less significance than the negative uttered by Ferdinand and Constantine. It needed these terrible circumstances to reveal the fact that the power of royalty in modern Europe was not so ineffective, so imaginary, as people were tempted to suppose.

Before he fell under the stroke of the assassin, Humbert I, who had already been the subject of several attempts upon his life, used to say that such attempts were “the wages of his trade.” Victor Emmanuel III has also been subjected to the same risk, which he has met with the same quiet courage. In March 1912, as he was going to the Pantheon, there to salute the tomb of his father, an anarchist fired two revolver-shots at the King, seriously wounding an officer of his escort. In the midst of the patriotic fever which the expedition to Tripoli had awakened, the unsuccessful attempt of Dalba served merely to

strain Italian loyalism to a higher pitch. The anarchist was behind the times. As a regicide he would have stood outside his age.

Victor Emmanuel III has not the geniality of his father and his grandfather. We do not see him walking the streets of Rome or Turin, familiarly saluted by the passers-by. Studious and rather uncommunicative, it has been said of him that he is an "intellectual" on the throne. But he possesses in the highest degree the traditions of the House of Savoy. He has thoroughly mastered his profession of constitutional sovereign, and everyone knows the part which he has played in all affairs of State. In politics it is said that his preferences have often been given to advanced radicalism. He has been called the "lay king." One Italian journalist even styled him, half as a compliment and half as a jest, a "King Deadweight." Deadweight if you will, but Victor Emmanuel III has none the less, in the fifteen years since he succeeded his father, conducted two national campaigns, of which the second is the boldest enterprise into which the Italian monarchy has thrown itself for the last fifty years. Deadweight perhaps, but he has succeeded perfectly in coming to an understanding with the Church. And it is during his reign that Italy has inaugurated in the Orient a new and active foreign policy founded on the defence and protection of her Catholic interests.

The war of 1915 will have won an enormous personal popularity for Victor Emmanuel III. His courage, and the simplicity with which he lives in the midst of his soldiers, have already created a legend. And where a member of the

House of Savoy is concerned, legend is always ready to crystallise. Some time after the attempt on the King's life made in 1912 a distinguished Italian writer, Signor Gabriele Fiorentino, defined his loyalism, and that of the vast majority of his countrymen, in the following terms :

“ We have taken our kings from a rough, energetic, soldierly family, neither dilettante nor artistic nor intellectualist, if I may be permitted so barbarous an expression. And we love them because we feel that we have in them a central point, a leader who is embarrassed neither by dreams nor by sentimental foolishness. All rally in a mass round the present King, as was seen after the attempt upon his life ; all, from the curé to the Garibaldian, from the great noble to the street-porter ; because he is a man ; because he holds in check all the bewildered, *bourgeois* Governments of Europe ; because he breaks through the cobwebs of cantankerous diplomats ; because he has made us conscious of our strength.”

Moreover, Victor Emmanuel III may flatter himself that he has already rallied to the monarchy almost as many notable republicans as his father and grandfather before him.

To the list of “ royal conquests,” for example, he has added Signor Enrico Ferri, and, recently, Signor Barzilai. When this eminent representative of republican Irredentism consented, in July 1915, to enter the Salandra Cabinet as minister without portfolio, the *Idea nazionale* commented upon the incident as follows :

“ It is impossible to deny that the appointment of Signor Barzilai has yet another political signifi-



cation : namely, the adhesion to the monarchical system of a known and tenacious supporter of the republican system. In assuming the function of a councillor of the Crown Signor Barzilai has renounced his ideal, which was to replace monarchical institutions by republican. He has recognised in the monarchical institutions virtues which he had hitherto believed peculiar to republican institutions alone. Thus is repeated the example already given by other politicians of the little Italy school. Veterans of the republican system have gone over to the monarchy on finding in it the effective interpretation and the concrete application of their national ideal."

It was, moreover, during the reign of Victor Emmanuel III that the Italian monarchy was to make an experiment which assuredly none of its supporters would have dared to advise twenty-five years earlier : an experiment in which prophets of ill augury would perhaps have seen the beginnings of ruin for the House of Savoy and Italian unity, but which, on the contrary, has succeeded with the utmost brilliance. The Italian Government gave yet another proof of its sense of opportunity and its address when it introduced universal suffrage. It is a fact that universal suffrage, formerly feared by the Government as a species of monster, no longer frightens it to-day. Instructed by the examples of Napoleon III and Bismarck, statesmen finally came to understand that universal suffrage was essentially an approbative and ratificatory suffrage, while all the limited or property suffrages were disputative, unstable, and anarchical. In France two monarchies, the Restoration and the

July Monarchy, made the experiment of the limited suffrage, and died of it ; so that a wit was inspired to remark, not without justification, that if Charles X had granted the right of the vote to every Frenchman he would still have been on the throne. Like the Emperor Francis Joseph, who had granted it, a short time previously, for other reasons, Victor Emmanuel III, ably advised by Signor Giolitti, gave universal suffrage to Italy, and he has had no reason to regret it from any point of view : neither from that of the king, nor from the dynastic point of view, nor from the national.

One of the prominent characteristics of the elections of October 1913 was, in the first place, the waning of the traditional republican ideal. In the Swiss democracy the *Journal de Genève* recorded this phenomenon with interest.

"The republican group," it said, "in the last Italian Chamber, numbered twenty-three deputies ; there are now only ten. An evident proof that the republican ideal is going out of favour with the popular masses. . . . If the republican party sees its ranks depleted from day to day, this is precisely because it now represents an anachronism merely. The Italy of to-day, which has very definite aspirations and ambitions, regards the monarchy more than ever as the condition of its present prosperity and its future greatness, while the Republic inevitably evokes ideas of subdivision and diminishment ; it is everything that is anti-nationalist."

Indeed, the reply given by universal suffrage when applied for the first time in Italy was before everything nationalist in quality. Signor Giolitti,

who was then Prime Minister, and a real Parliamentary dictator, was not yet regarded as a "Little Italian." He had even been favoured, after the Roman fashion, with the surname of "the African," because he had been the initiator of the Libyan campaign.

As a sort of symbol intended to show how closely the external activity of Italy was bound up with its domestic policy, Signor Giolitti had caused the day of the elections to coincide with the despatch to Athens of a very imperious note relating to affairs in the Epirus. He had prefaced this solemn day by a great speech, in which he drew the most flourishing picture of the general situation of the kingdom. The picture, for that matter, was hardly flattered; the progress of all kinds which Italy has achieved, especially during the last fifteen years, at home as well as abroad, cannot have escaped any serious observer. Signor Giolitti propounded this progress to the self-love of the Italians. He insisted in particular, and not without reason, on the financial progress of the country, which has been one of the surprises of the age. If one were to compare the state of Italian finances as it was at this moment with what it was in the past—and this past had known difficult moments—one would be forced to recognise that the progress of Italy had not been least remarkable in this domain. The kingdom of Italy succeeded in creating rather than in re-creating its finances, and in transforming deficits into surplus values by an effort of will which deserves to be upheld as an example to more than one other Government. It astonished many observers to note, during the two or three

years which preceded the European war, that in the midst of the great "slump" in the most celebrated Government stocks, the Italian Rente formed an exception by the firmness of its prices. Who would have dared to suggest, who would have consented to believe, only twenty years ago, that during a period of turmoil the Italian Rente would behave more steadily and stand at a higher figure than the French Rente? Who would have dared to put forward such an impertinent paradox?

It is said that one of the best known of our financiers, one of the authorities of economic science, and at the same time one of the powers of the French banking world, was solicited, about ten years ago, to interest himself and other French capitalists in Italian affairs. Although a man of great experience, and as a rule very clear-sighted, he refused, and allowed the true reason of his refusal to be divined: it was an invincible distrust of Italy, a country which he refused to take seriously, which he regarded merely as a land of beggars and accordion-players. The result was that the German banking world occupied the place left vacant by France.

A strange country, France! It is perhaps the first country in the world in letters, art, and invention. At the present moment it is giving daily proofs of heroism, determination, and energy, and its moral resiliency is incomparable. Yet when it is a question of utilising these gifts, of employing them to the profit of national life, it seems as though a faculty were lacking. The immense majority of Frenchmen are to-day ignorant of almost everything outside their own country,



and of the real aspect of the face of the earth. They have entered upon one of the most stupendous wars of history with a conception of the world which is dangerous in its falsity.

The newspapers, the public, the diplomatists—they are all deluded, but not merely concerning Turkey, Bulgaria, and Greece. They have made their greatest mistakes in respect of our chiefest enemies. They were guilty of false imaginings as to the real strength of Germany and the resisting powers of Austria. They began by committing stupendous errors of calculation because they lived on prejudices and stereotyped ideas which were far removed from the reality. It is not merely that we have misunderstood our Allies, that we have failed to appreciate the character of their institutions considered in relation to the war, and the nature of the assistance which they would be able to lend us. We have been dominated by a sentimental view of politics, while to this conception Germany opposed her experience of men and things, her realism, and her implacable use of force. But at the same time, and by a contrast which finally disarmed us, and put an end to proper understanding, all that section of the French *élite* which invoked the practical spirit despised and rejected—with very few exceptions—all general ideas, professing to rely upon figures and statistics alone. As though the very financiers even confined themselves to these and these only!

The great fact relating to modern Italy is its national feeling, which is carried to the verge of passion. In the economic domain this passion finds expression in tenacious industry, an ardent

desire to equal the great industrial nations, and an absolute confidence in the credit of the Italian State. Italy, in order to achieve her unity, in order to endow herself with the organism of a modern State, was obliged to borrow money from abroad. Little by little Italian savings have redeemed this debt, have brought it home again, as a point of national honour. This is what has assured the financial solidity of Italy in critical periods. This has been her salvation in the past, and it constitutes an enduring promise for her future. Those who do not reckon upon these forces, or fail to discern them, are false realists, exposed to every kind of error and misconception.

The elections of 1913 marked an important date in the public life of Italy. In many respects they announced the events of to-day. If, as we believe, the year 1915 saw Italy enter upon a new phase of history, the phase of expansion, then 1913 was the preface to this phase, for it effected a concentration of energies, still further appeased the conflicts of the past, and subordinated party politics to national politics.

The manner in which this electoral consultation was effected, and the results which it yielded, were especially significant for those—and we were of the number—who regarded Italy as one of the few Powers which had preserved their liberty of movement in Europe, and which were capable of choosing and directing events, instead of submitting to be led by them. From that moment it was obvious that Italy was preparing for external action. But one might still have felt some uncertainty as to the direction which she would

give to this action. It is sufficient to recall the fact that Signor Giolitti was President of Council. And as we know the attitude observed by Signor Giolitti in 1915, we can hardly doubt that if he had been in power during the European crisis, the line which he would have forced Italian politics to follow would not have differed sensibly from that adopted by Signor Salandra and Baron Sonnino. So Signor Giolitti sowed and others have reaped. But it was by his doing that Italy was placed in a position to follow an imperial policy beyond her frontiers ; or so, at least, we believe history will judge.

Already, in the Chamber, which was dominated by his authority, Signor Giolitti had practically suppressed the existence of parties, which were made mutually to exhaust one another by excessive friction. The effects of the same policy began to be felt by public opinion, the conflicts of former days tending to quiet down, the old passions being forgotten and the old revolutionary idealism obscured. For a long time the new Italy, fearing a renewed offensive on the part of the Church, had demanded protection and defence from opposing influences, and had given Freemasonry an important place in the State. This, by the way, was a very natural phenomenon. Freemasonry, owing to the part it had played in the unification of Italy, was incorporated in the history and therefore in the public life of the nation. But from the day on which Freemasonry ceased to be regarded by the Italian people as one of the instruments of unity it was bound to lose its *raison d'être* and a great part of its prestige.

However, it was no easy task to divorce the masonic ideal from the national ideal. If there was in Italy one historic memory which counted for something, one sentimental force which conspired to favour the anticlerical democracy, it was Garibaldism. It took more than one campaign to outwear this tradition, and in these campaigns the Nationalists were the leaders. They succeeded in proving to their contemporaries that as far as Italian interests were concerned the masonic idea was an anachronism, and, as such, dangerous, and therefore to be eliminated. Revelations as to the influence of masonic elements in the Army produced a tremendous sensation, and were followed by a tremendous protest. Wounded to the heart, the Italian Grand Orient had to emerge from its secrecy and appeal to the public ; we saw, in the summer of 1913, on all the walls of Italy, the manifesto by which it recalled the services which it had rendered to the nation. It had assumed a posture of defence, which enabled one to prophesy retreat, and the defeat which the elections ratified. Here and there, to be sure, the Government supported candidates whose affiliation to masonry was indubitable ; Signor Giolitti excelled in such experiments in political chemistry, whereby he was accustomed to compose his Parliamentary dough. On the whole, the Governmental programme sanctioned by the elector excluded anticlericalism, passed it over in silence, at the moment when the Papacy, for its own part, had removed the *non expedit* authorising, and almost urging, all Catholics to make use of their voting-papers. Universal suffrage had realised that from the moment Italy



made ready to enter upon a far-reaching foreign policy, interest bade her make use of the influence and the expansive force of Catholicism. In this new orientation of Italy the part played by positive and deliberate calculation has been noted by more than one French observer : for example, by M. François Deloncle, a Radical deputy, and by M. André Tardieu of the *Temps*.<sup>1</sup>

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For forty-five years the successor of St. Peter and the King of Italy have lived facing one another. From the Quirinal one may see the Vatican, and half an hour's walk will take you from one palace to the other. However, the two powers ignore one another. Four Popes and three Kings have succeeded one another, and the diplomatic situation remains as it was created by the protest of Pio Nono on the morrow of the entry through the breach in the Porta Pia. The Papacy does not recognise the accomplished fact. It has rejected the law of guarantees, and the indemnity which was offered it, and is un-

<sup>1</sup> One might devote a whole chapter to the greatness and the decadence of Italian Freemasonry. Of late years numerous incidents have given evidence of a reaction against masonic influence. We need only recall the case of Signor Camera, a deputy, and some of his colleagues, whose indictment was demanded by the lodges of the Scottish rite, because they voted in favour of religious instruction in the schools. Signor Giolitti was then accused of having designedly caused dissension and discussion in the ranks of Freemasonry, by supporting moderates like Signor Fera against the more advanced section led by Dr. Ballori, then assistant to the Radical Mayor of Rome, Dr. Nathan. The fall of Dr. Nathan's municipal government and of the Roman *bloc* was, by the way, one of the most notable episodes of this conflict.

willing to owe anything to the Italian monarchy. The latter, for its part, retains the same position : it has fulfilled and is still ready to fulfil the engagements which it undertook in 1870. It goes no farther. The protest of the Holy See, renewed by each Pontiff, has finally created a state of affairs which, although it appeared provisional, has lasted up to the present, and which the Italian Government has come to regard as one of the conditions of everyday life ; so much so, that it would regret its disappearance (or at least professes that it would do so).

It happens that this absence of contact between the two powers has in the long run become one of the conditions of Italian politics. No relations : therefore no conflicts, no discussions. We have here a translation into fact—somewhat unexpected, but possibly not the worst—of the celebrated formula : “ A free Church in a free State.” Complete liberty : each of the elements evolves in an independent sphere. So it has come about, by an unforeseen and almost paradoxical result of the conflicts between Church and State in the nineteenth century, that Italy is one of the few corners of the world in which there are no real difficulties in matters of religion. In the country in which the Pope resides there is, properly speaking, no “ clericalism ” and no “ clerical party.” In the kingdom which dispossessed the Holy See and suppressed its temporal power, there is no religious warfare. Here is another result, which is no less fortunate : the protest of the Holy See, and its refusal to recognise the accomplished fact, facilitate, from the international point of view, the task of the Italian

Government, for this protest and this refusal constitute a guarantee of Papal independence. Europe formerly feared that in a united Italy the Pope would be subordinated to the State.

"The influence of the King of Sardinia in Rome," said a memorandum addressed by Marshal de Noailles to Louis XV, "would be increased to such a point that the Pope would be nothing more than a sort of first chaplain to the King, forced to follow the inspirations of the Court of Turin."

The Popes, although Italians, and elected by a College in which the majority of the Cardinals are Italians, did not desire and would not condescend to become the Grand Almoners of the new Kings of Italy, nor did the latter seek any such method of gratifying their vanity. So the Papacy, although deprived of its temporal sovereignty, has remained, in complete independence, the highest spiritual authority in the world.

What words would have been cunning enough to explain the subtle mystery by which Italy, while officially ignoring the Holy See, has yet been able to steep herself in the effulgence of that authority which is above all the nations? By what genius for reconciling ideals, by what intuition of the politics and history of the new Italy was she able, on making Rome her national capital, to preserve its character as the capital of Catholicism? For such are the facts. Every Italian, down to the last Mazzinist, or the traditional "anticlerical" of the Trastevere, is intimately convinced that the city would be uncrowned, that the nation would suffer loss,

were the Pope to abandon it. "All Italians trembled lest the tiara should pass to those beyond the mountains, to the great loss and dishonour of Italy," said a Florentine chronicler, after the election of Pius II over Cardinal d'Estouteville. And this is a feeling which has not ceased to dwell in the hearts of Italians. It has only increased with the Nationalist and Imperialist state of mind characteristic of modern Italy, and the development of a great Italian policy in the Mediterranean basin and the East.

We arrived in Rome just as the interview between M. Latapie and the Pope had been published in France: one of the most startling "scoops" which this journalist has ever effected. We had read this document, with the comments of the Italian press upon it, on the journey from Florence to Rome. And we expected to find the city, on the morrow of the May demonstrations, once more in a state of excitement, possibly of insurrection. . . . One word especially struck us, among the remarks which M. Latapie attributed to Benedict XV: it was the word "neutrality." At the moment when the "neutralists" were regarded as bad Italians, a few days after the most notorious of them had been chased through the streets of Rome, was there not reason to fear that an equivocation or a mistranslation placed in the mouth of the Pope might give rise to serious incidents, and awaken old ferments? A phrase imperfectly understood or interpreted, an inflexion of the voice omitted, would be enough, perhaps, to revive old quarrels. There was a time when M. Latapie's article would assuredly have brought thousands of demonstra-



tors to the Piazza di San Pietro. The windows of the Vatican would have been broken, and priests would have been thrashed along the Borgo. However, nothing of the kind befell. Italy is no longer in those days when the Roman youth, on the Ponte Sant' Angelo, tried to throw the coffin of Pio Nono into the Tiber.

No one had been unaware of the persevering labours of German and Austrian diplomacy in the Vatican during the years preceding the war. Here again was a labour of preparation for the war, a work of investment, which lasted until the day when Italy broke with her ancient Allies. The task was all the easier in that the field was clear and the adversary absent. France was not represented at the Holy See. England has since then been represented, but late in the day. Without competitors, the Austrian Ambassador and the Ministers of Prussia and Bavaria were profuse in amiability and in promises. They neglected no means of pleasing, even the pettiest : honours, decorations, and a luxurious table were not neglected ; and we must not forget intimidation, threats of reprisals (" Josephism " or the *Kulturkampf*) which, in the German manner, alternated with fair words. Here we have the explanation of certain movements and certain attitudes which have given rise to some surprise. But did they think the Papacy was to be won over so easily—that it would renounce its free-will for so little ? They little knew it who thought so.

This is why public opinion in Italy was not aroused. The public did not believe that the Holy See was conquered by Germany ; it had too high an ideal of the political spirit of the

Vatican and of its love of independence. In Rome, indeed, men take a world-wide view of things. Moreover, they remember. Of all the cities of the world, time counts for least in Rome. History does not allow its lessons to be forgotten there; and men's minds are not oppressed by the power of the passing day, by the immediate reality. Imperial Germany, for the sake of her political necessities, was lavish of advances toward the Church. The Church accepted them all the more readily, in that she had not, for a long time, been spoiled in this direction. But she accepted them calmly. We remarked one day that the well-known appellation of *Kulturkampf*, which stands for German and Imperialistic anti-clericalism, contains and implies that famous *Kultur* in whose name Germany has undertaken her war of conquest, and it seemed to us that our remark was understood.

"It is certainly the case," we were informed, "that Germany has performed impossibilities in order to win for her cause the Catholic element in Italy, and in Spain, and indeed in all the neutral countries. In coming to Rome she came to the wrong place! We are on the spot which witnessed the struggles between the priesthood and the Empire, and which has never forgotten the vicissitudes of that struggle. We know that the Germanic Emperor never flattered the Holy See save to enslave it, to make it his tool, and that he bullied it every time the successor of St. Peter attempted to make his independence respected. Whether it be a Hohenstaufen of the Middle Ages or a Hohenzollern of modern times, the spirit and the methods are the same. And no

one here has forgotten how Leo XIII was rewarded for having sought to bear himself courteously, as the great *seigneur* he was, toward Wilhelm II.

“It was in 1888. Wilhelm II had recently ascended the throne. As he was in Rome a visit to the Pope was agreed upon, according to the formal rules observed in such a case. Leo XIII intended to speak of important matters to the young Emperor, and it was a favourable occasion for the discussion of several matters of high politics. Bismarck did not wish this to happen; neither, in all probability, did Wilhelm II. For hardly had the Pope had time to exchange a few words with the Emperor, when Count Herbert von Bismarck, accompanied by Prince Henry of Prussia, entered the antechamber, and, hustling the majordomo, forced their way into the Pontifical cabinet, and put an end to the conversation between the two sovereigns, who, after an exchange of commonplace civilities, parted from one another.

“This serious and gratuitous insult to the Papacy, this revival of mediæval violence, has not been forgotten.

“And that is not all. Rome is not ignorant of the ideas of Wilhelm II concerning religion. Although the Emperor has on several occasions, and in the most public manner, spoken in praise of Catholicism, and although, with his peculiar art of dissimulation, of giving pleasure, without exception, to his interlocutors of the moment, he has often displayed his sympathy for the Church, his real opinion is no secret. He has betrayed it on several occasions. Wilhelm II’s

fixed idea, in the matter of religion, is to achieve the fusion of confessions and unity of belief in his own Empire. It was at Munster, in the heart of Catholic Germany, that he uttered, seven years ago, these solemn words, which have been remembered: 'To achieve German unity there is only one means; that is religion, not understood in the rigorous sense of ecclesiastical dogma, but in a wider sense, more practical for the purposes of life.'

"As has been well said by a French writer<sup>1</sup> who has, in all departments, closely studied the ideas of Wilhelm II, the Emperor dreams of a Germany in which Catholics and Protestants would be confounded in a vague unformulated Christianity, which would be nothing more or less than a sort of Imperialist religion, a State religion.<sup>2</sup> We have already, for that matter, been able to observe the effects of the Imperial policy on the spirit of German Catholicism. The Catholic Centre, formerly vivified by the Bismarckian persecution, is strangely altered. Ah, we are far from Windthorst, the noble Windt-

<sup>1</sup> M. Jules Arren, who died on the field of honour in the war of 1914.

<sup>2</sup> Compare this passage from one of the theorists of Pan-germanism, Ernest Hasse, in his book *The German Empire as a National State*, published in 1905: "We shall not renounce the hope of restoring the population of the German Empire to confessional unity. For the need of national German churches is not a religious matter only, but a national matter. Considerations of a national order demand that the Roman Catholics shall be detached from foreign influences, that is to say from Italo-Roman influences, and that a national German Catholic Church shall be founded," etc. (See M. Charles Andler's *Pangermanisme continental sous Guillaume II.*)



horst and his friends! The Centre of to-day is led by such men as Erzberger, Bachem, Spahn, who are intriguing politicians in the service of the Empire and Pangermanism, and whose maleficent work is not yet sufficiently realised.

“This work has been twofold. In the first place, it has consisted in weakening German Catholicism at home by depriving it of its peculiar characteristics by means of the principle of *inter-confessionality*, which, in a country where the majority is Protestant, in which both influence and power are on the side of Protestantism, delivered the lesser number into the hands of the greater. The leaders of the Centre—the Centre such as it has become in the hands of those whom one German Archbishop has called ‘the infected citizens of Cologne’—have worked, with a conscious understanding of their cause, in the direction of the fusion desired by Wilhelm II.

“Abroad they have devoted themselves frankly to the service of Pangermanism. The Belgian Catholics have revealed the false oaths and lying assurances which Erzberger and the other agents of the Centre had showered upon them before the war. The crime of the Belgian Catholics was that they trusted these harbingers of the invasion, who came to them swearing that never, never had it entered into the plans of the Imperial Government or of the Prussian Great General Staff to violate the neutrality of Belgium. Never was more cynical trickery heard of, nor a plainer abuse of confidence.

“But this was not enough. So far people have heard only of what happened in Germany.

One day they will know that the German Centre treated the Catholics of the whole world as Social Democracy treated the Socialists in France and elsewhere : using its influence to gain sympathies for Germany, or else to avert suspicion from the schemes of Wilhelm II.

“ Very often Germany, a Lutheran country, has caused the Papacy grievous anxiety. More than once Catholic Germany itself has displayed a spirit of rebellion. Rome has not forgotten that there was nowhere more opposition to the dogma of infallibility than in Germany, and that a theologian like Döllinger went to the length of schism, in which he persisted : Döllinger, as Pio Nono said, would have liked to make himself the Pope of the Germans. And one still remembers the *Los von Rom* movement, inspired in Austria by Pangermanism. One remembers too that the last years of Pius X were saddened by the resistance which the German faculties of theology opposed to the anti-modernist oath. There are many reasons, of different kinds, but equally forcible, which should prevent one from regarding Germany as the rampart of Catholicism, and above all as its only rampart.”

. . . . .

Among the peasants of Apulia and the Abruzzi one often meets, in the place of honour, a picture which represents the Pope and the King seated side by side in a gilded car. This popular coloured print is the ingenuous symbol of one of Italy's profoundest desires. It is the new alliance, toward which the Italian people has, in its secret heart, aspired since the first days of the unification.

Will the peasant's picture, which makes so light of theology, politics, and history, one day become a reality? Shall we see the Pope and the King reconciled? Would there not be so many inconveniences, so many dangers involved by a solemn reconciliation that the happiest chances are still offered by a continuation of the present state of affairs—that is, mere neighbourhood, without direct contact, and without hostilities? This is a provisional solution, no doubt. Will the future bring any other? No one knows, although more than one rumour is current of arrangements which the Italian Government is supposed to hold in reserve, and which might come into being after the war. But the Church is patient and will await her hour.

It will be noted that even in the war the Church has found her place. From the Pope to the humblest country curate, there have been no black looks, and no one has shirked his duty. The Church eagerly seized upon the occasion to prove that she was not estranged from the national Italian spirit. The "Black" aristocracy has furnished as many volunteers as the "White," and the Vatican has made no attempt to deter them. The bishops recommended the faithful to serve their King and their country: witness the collection of documents published by Senator Vittorio Polacco, which contains the testimony of sixty cardinals, archbishops, and bishops. Here, for example, is a pastoral letter in which the Bishop of Tortona invites his clergy and his people to pray for the Pope, and also for the Sovereign, "the august descendant of a race of strong and wise men," and at the same time for

“our beloved Italy, dearer than ever to the heart of her sons.”

However, the civil power was not behindhand, and Signor Salandra signed a telegram in which the Grand Almoner of the Navy was called a “soldier of Christ and the King.” So, in this sequel (but a sequel so singularly aggrandised) of the struggle for unity, in this enterprise of Italian Nationalism and Imperialism, the Church finds herself quite naturally engaged, because the Mediterranean is involved as much as the Adriatic, and the East as much as the Trentino. Is it a sign, an indication for the future? Must we regard it as the beginning of the realisation of that vehement prophecy which was uttered by Proudhon fifty years ago, and which then appeared so excessive?

“What the Italians, full of their grandiose and dramatic memories,” he said, “are dreaming of, is to make Italy, from the political point of view, a sixth Great Power; from the religious point of view, after subordinating the Papacy to the monarchy, to confer upon the latter the protectorate of Catholicism. . . . They rightly covet Rome, with her pontifical prestige, for their United Italy; they covet the Papacy, but accommodated to the constitutional system. Italy, whatever people say, is still Papal; the sarcasms of Garibaldi and Mazzini concerning the priesthood do not affect this fact. They hope, by subordinating the Papacy to the new order of things, to bestow upon Italy the supremacy of the Catholic world, to supplant France and Austria, henceforth mere satellites of the great Roman and Christian planet. Rome



and unity : then, presently, Venice, the Ticino, Corsica, Nice, Algeria : to consummate this great revival nothing is needed but to change a word ; instead of calling Victor Emmanuel King he should be called Emperor. Then Italy, more than ever, being Pontifical and Imperial, would find herself at the summit of her dreams : she would have recovered, as Mazzini says, the apostolate of Europe."

Carried away on the tide of polemics, Proudhon, perhaps, exaggerated slightly. But at the time he wrote these words his was almost the only mind in France to believe in the possibility of such a future for the youthful Italy. Those of the Right agreed with those of the Left in predicting revolution. Now the Revolution, in these early years of the twentieth century, appears, in Italy as elsewhere, as an expiring force, an outworn passion, far exceeded by the passion of Nationalism. Yet, by a strange hazard, only a few weeks before the European war broke out, a revolutionary movement, which at first appeared serious, aroused the people of the Romagna. Surprised, with his staff, by the insurgents, a general was even compelled to surrender his sword. What alarming prognostics were once more in circulation concerning the situation in Italy ! However, when events were observed more closely they appeared in their just proportion.

The Count Soderini, a deputy for Ancona, informed me that he had become convinced that this "red week" was surreptitiously excited by Austria, that suspicious companion, uncertain even of herself. But it was also apparent that

Austria had a very poor run for her money, for the movement, which did not affect a single large town, was merely a sort of Jacquerie, an eruption of peasant anarchy, with a few reminiscences of the old communist and federalist spirit which is always alive among the Italians. At the same time, these rural troubles, although repressed by the end of three days, had determined an immediate reaction of the most definite nature in the greater cities. Rome, on the 20th of June, at the municipal elections, overthrew the *bloc* and the government of Dr. Nathan. If the revolutionary idea was able to find favourable soil, it was in the rural districts, among backward populations, while the urban populations proved refractory to anarchy. Thus the revolution reappeared in Italy only for a moment, on the eve of the war, and only to assume a retrograde character, the aspect of a phenomenon of another age, without influence upon the forward march of the nation, and only to be swiftly and surely chastised.

## CHAPTER VI

### FROM THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE TO THE QUADRUPLE ENTENTE

A saying of Thiers'—A false conception of Italian "gratitude"—The origins of the triple pact—Italy between France and Austria—Sentiment and reason—The policy of Crispi : modification of the system—Italy and England : maritime assurance—The "turns round the ballroom"—The "penetration of alliances"—The Franco-Italian *rapprochement*—Renewed tension, and a fresh obstacle—Italy's Mediterranean policy—Vain attempts of Germany—The question of the Twelve Islands—Sir Edward Grey and the Marquis di San Giuliano—What happened in April 1914—A reason for confidence—Neutrality or intervention ?

"THE gratitude of Italy will endure in proportion to its feebleness." This saying of Thiers' is famous. But the idea thus expressed was false ; Thiers had fallen into the common error of the time, that Italy had contracted a debt of gratitude toward France. This conception of the benefactor holding a mortgage over his *protégé* was once made the subject of a celebrated comedy. It arises from a vice of the mind, a serious obliquity which for more than fifty years has in the most unfortunate manner burdened the relations between France and Italy.

One might, like Thiers and Proudhon, have been hostile to Italian unity ; and, like them, one

might have blamed the Second Empire for labouring to set up a powerful neighbour at its gates. The Italians are sufficiently experienced as politicians to put themselves in the place of others, to understand the interest and the point of view of the foreigner, even of the enemy. They do not take exception to a sentiment which, as they will readily admit, would be their own in case of necessity; and they bear no one ill-will because he frankly expresses it. But that they should be regarded as constrained to eternal gratitude—that is, dependence—for a service rendered—this they will not admit. And here it is the turn of the Frenchman to understand, to enter into the state of the Italian mind.

France has largely contributed to the independence and unity of Italy; so much is true. But did France seek to create Italy for her own sake, or for Italy's? When the Italian State was called into being, was it expected to live for its own sake or for others? After helping Italy to come to life, France should have been willing to see her walk upon her own feet. The obscure, ill-defined, scarcely avowed feeling that the Italian people remained under an obligation to France was to exercise, on the relations between France and Italy, a more disastrous effect, and engender more misunderstandings, than violent and open polemics. Let us remember that we have just seen the Bulgarians reply almost in the same terms to their Russian liberators: "Why did you give us our liberty if only to control us, if only to reproach us for the use we choose to make of it?"

The Italians have given a complete explana-



tion of the motives which, after 1870, led them to adhere to the Triple Alliance. Their policy responded to a necessity of equilibrium. They sought to guarantee themselves against France on the one hand, against Austria on the other. For the young Italian State France, even in defeat, was yet too powerful, and her power of attraction too formidable. "I abhor above everything the haughty French protectorate," said Mazzini in a well-known letter to Nino Bixio. Italy wished it to be clearly understood that she was her own mistress. In allying herself with Germany she traced a definite line of demarcation on the French side, by which her enfranchisement was to be consecrated. However, Austria was still too menacing. Let Italy find herself alone in the presence of Austria and her unity, still a new and fragile thing, would run a serious risk. From the moment when Italy was unwilling and unable to live with Austria as her declared enemy, there was only one resource : to come to an understanding with her. But to do this without surrender, to ensure an honourable solution, which should not entail more drawbacks than advantages, it was needful to resort to a third party. Bismarck was there, offering his services. Italy's relations with the Court of Vienna were established through Berlin. Thus the German alliance became a guarantee against Austria.

Many of the characteristics of the old policy of the Dukes of Savoy, a policy of equilibrium and prudence, were to be found in this combination, applied to the new Italy. It would seem, moreover, that the statesmen who concluded

the triple pact had designed to safeguard Italy against two sentimental tendencies. One was hatred of Austria, which, by provoking a premature war, would have exposed the Italian people to disaster. The other tendency—ever to be dreaded, no doubt, but not entirely imaginary—might have arisen from the sympathy of one section of public opinion (a section larger and more influential thirty-five years ago than to-day) for the institutions, men, and ideals of the French democracy. To hold the balance equal between Italy's two neighbours, to be a slave neither to hatred of Austria nor to affection for France—such, thirty-five years ago, was the fundamental idea of Italian diplomacy. Prince von Bülow was therefore quite correct when he stated, in his treatise on *German Politics*, that Italy was united to Germany “by reason,” although he himself since then has not been able to derive all the consequences from this principle which he implied. Bismarck, more penetrating, had on the contrary perfectly comprehended the empirical nature of the Triple Alliance, when he so prophetically recommended his successors not to count absolutely, unconditionally, or eternally upon the assistance of Italy.

However, the Italians have sometimes permitted themselves to exceed the limits which they established. Politic as it may be, the Italian people is also given to enthusiasms. A few impassioned, immoderate spirits, cleverly handled, unknown to themselves, by the Machiavellism of Berlin, sufficed for a long time to distort the system of a purely rational foreign

policy at which Italy had arrived about 1880. Crispi, whose name evokes all the differences, all the difficulties, all the hitches which have occurred between France and Italy, does not greatly resemble the classic portrait which Macaulay has traced of the Italian statesman :

“His passions, like well-drilled troops, are impetuous by discipline, and never forget, in their stubborn fury, the rule to which they have submitted themselves. Vast and complex schemes of ambition fill his entire mind, yet his countenance and his language display only a philosophic moderation. . . . Never does he excite the suspicion of his enemy by petty provocations. His design appears only when it is accomplished.”

But Crispi's passions knew no discipline. He could not even abstain from petty provocations. M. Billot has related this anecdote in his memoirs of the time when he was Ambassador in Rome : Having gone to see the Minister, at a moment when relations between the two countries were strained, Crispi received him with his most disdainful air, barely rising from his chair to welcome the representative of France. Then M. Billot, bethinking himself of a trick, pretended not to understand him, and asked if the chimney was not on fire. Crispi jumped up. And immediately, comprehending the witty lesson in manners, he recovered his usual courtesy.

It is quite obvious to-day that by his excessive and excitable nature, and his megalomaniac spirit, Crispi seriously distorted the Triple Alliance, as conceived by its authors on the Italian side. A combination intended to give Italy liberty of movement with security on her eastern frontier

became, through him, an instrument in the hands of Bismarck. By succumbing to the Bismarckian temptations and aggravations Crispi placed his country in a state of dependence on Germany. He had listened too long to the Mephistopheles of Berlin, who as early as 1806 had whispered to Mazzini that "the empire of the Mediterranean ought to be the constant ideal of Italy." In directing France toward Tunis, Bismarck had calculated in the first place that he would divert her attention from continental problems, and then that he would envenom with jealousy the relations between France and the Italian monarchy. At the back of his mind was the idea (revived with no greater success by Herr Kiderlein-Wächter, his disciple, at the moment of the famous *Manouba* and *Carthage* incidents) that Germany's only chance of finding Italy beside her in a war against France lay in a war engendered between France and Italy by rivalry in the Mediterranean. So, according to the just expression which M. André Tardieu has employed in his book on *France et les Alliances*, Italy, in the course of this period, became the "offensive point" of the Triple Alliance.

The fall of Crispi restored to Italy her independence, made her shake off the yoke of Germany, and gave scope to the Italian alliances. Thenceforth Italy desired to keep herself free within the Triple Alliance. This was the period which Prince von Bülow, predestined to be disappointed by Italy, styled the period of the "turns round the ballroom."<sup>1</sup> For nearly twenty years, from 1896 to 1915, the incompar-

<sup>1</sup> *Tours de valse.*



able *virtuosi* who succeeded Cavour were to run over the whole keyboard of European combinations.

Even before the form of continental assurance represented by the German alliance was concluded, Italy had concluded a maritime assurance with Great Britain. England had favoured the birth of Italian unity. Palmerston was its godfather. Since then Italy had not ceased to cultivate England's friendship. With Great Britain she had agreed to make the *status quo* in the Mediterranean respected. Where Great Britain was concerned, as the Marquis di Rudini remarked, Italy was aware of no conflicting interests. Until the old colonial rivalry of France and Great Britain was appeased by the initiative of Edward VII, until the Entente Cordiale was concluded, the Anglo-Italian agreement, it will be readily understood, only complicated and embittered the relations between France and Italy. Matters changed their aspect when France and England had established a *rapprochement*. As the ice between Paris and London thawed, so the material distrust of Rome and Paris decreased. As Fashoda was forgotten, Tunis became a less poignant memory; so that the tendencies toward a Franco-Italian *rapprochement*, which had already been manifested by the Delcassé-Prinetti agreement, became more fully pronounced when the old irritating disputes between the French and British Governments were settled in 1904. It would even seem that a secret convention, concluded on the basis of "Tripoli for Fez," was dated from this year;

a convention of which one more particularly mysterious clause promised France that in the event of her being attacked by Germany Italy would not mobilise on the Alpine frontier, and would remove her fleet from the Western Mediterranean ; Italy being above all preoccupied in safeguarding her interests and in arresting the extension of Austro-Hungarian rule in the Balkans. It will therefore be seen that the stage of the events of 1914 was set ten years in advance.

These agreements, the admirable fruit of the activity of M. Camille Barrère, the French Ambassador in Rome, were proved efficacious at the Algeçiras Conference. There, to her great disgust, Germany found herself supported only by Austria, while the bulk of this European tribunal, before which Germany had dragged France, under the threat of war, in order to settle the problem of Morocco, overruled her and decided against her. It was not difficult to see that after such an experience Germany would never again consent to submit any dispute to a general conference of the Powers, but, to a process which she would feel certain of losing, would thenceforth prefer intimidation, which of itself would inevitably lead to war.

This menace was doubtless apparent to the Governments of the Great Powers ; for they were no sooner constituted into two hostile groups—the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente—than they endeavoured to temper those elements of the system which seemed likely to engender collisions, as though they had foreseen that by striving to re-establish that European equilibrium which the might of Germany had threatened they

had created a more certain occasion of exciting the dreaded conflict.

For several years, accordingly, we saw all the members of the European hexarchy seeking, one after another, in addition to the assurance provided by their allies, a sort of counter-assurance from the allies of the adverse group. It was no longer a question of "turns round the ball-room," but of whole dances. Russia, at the Potsdam interview, concluded an agreement with Germany. The French Government maintained the best relations with the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and the Order of St. Etienne, given to M. Fallières by the Emperor Francis Joseph after the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, bore witness to this policy, which was also furthered by M. Crozier's mission to Vienna. This process is known in France as the "penetration of alliances." The alliances formed did more than penetrate one another; until 1912 they were confounded and intermingled. Italy, especially, with her usual suppleness, excelled in these brilliant diplomatic complexities, in which she felt quite at home. Always the friend of England, without allowing her friendship with Germany to cool, she maintained good relations with France, and, as the Anglo-French *entente* resulted in a *rapprochement* between Rome and Paris, so the Franco-Italian *rapprochement* led, by way of the Franco-Russian Alliance, to cordial relations between the French Republic and the Russian Empire. In 1909, on the day when Nicholas II at Racconigi visited King Victor-Emmanuel—a visit which slightly preceded an Austro-Russian negotiation in which Italian diplomacy was the

intermediary—on that day the circuit was accomplished and the disintegration of the alliances seemed complete. It seemed as though the rivalry of the two hostile groups had disappeared, as though the conflict of the two systems had become impossible. In reality Italy was the only country which was to retain her liberty of movement, and to remain free to extricate herself from difficulties, while the logic of events was dragging all the rest toward the unknown, whether they would or no.

With such precedents how did it happen that precisely two years before the European war fresh misunderstandings arose between Italy and France, so that after the incidents of the *Manouba* and the *Carthage* it was feared that the worst days of the time of Crispi or that of the Aigues-Mortes affair might be revived?

It must be admitted that France was not wholly innocent of responsibility for this misunderstanding. Hardly had friendly contact been established, when the fundamental principal of Talleyrand—"No enthusiasm!"—was infringed. Old memories flew to the heads of a section of the political world in France. As though the Italy of the twentieth century had still been the revolutionary and liberal Italy of Mazzini and Garibaldi, there were those who expected her to respond to the ideals and sentiments of a vanished world. This anachronism resulted in disappointment, and this resulted in bitterness, and this, again, in blunders. In cool blood, and in all justice, can we reproach the Italians for having thought of their own interests, for having been



diplomatic, for having devoted their minds to serious questions and results, while the French indulged in a sentimental policy and seemed to think that they were still hugging Silvio Pellico to their bosoms ?

As M. André Tardieu has remarked, even if the Franco-Italian agreement had merited entire approbation "the manner in which we have practised it is assuredly less worthy of praise ; thus, it was imprudent to compromise our relations with the Holy See by President Loubet's visit to Rome, and thereby to prepare for the rupture of the Concordat. We should have appreciated our interests better ; and Italy incurs no reproach from the fact of our error. At the same time, it is certain that she has benefited by the weakening of our position in the East, and that by the agreement of January 1907 we dedicated this enfeeblement to her profit. But here again we alone are to blame in that we did not foresee that by breaking with Rome we should sooner or later lose all the advantages attached to the exercise of the Catholic protectorate in the Levant." <sup>1</sup>

The fundamental error consisted in regarding Italy as a fossil power, in supposing that she had remained at the same point as ourselves ; that she was conducting a philosophic struggle against Catholicism and the Papacy ; while she was above all considering how she should conciliate these two powers to the advantage of her own expansion. The *quid pro quo*, being detected, gave rise to irritation ; error upon error ! At least let us remember our mistake !

<sup>1</sup> *La France et les alliances*, p. 108.

It was the same where Libya was concerned. To obtain a free hand in Morocco, France, as a matter of reciprocity, proclaimed her disinterestedness in respect of the Tripolitaine. But this was perhaps going a little too far, as M. Tardieu again remarks in the book which we have just cited, believing in his heart that Italy would not foreclose on her mortgage, and that the permission would remain platonic. Here our mistake had another cause. It arose from an inaccurate estimate of the sentiments, desires, and energies of Italy. France had no greater belief in Italian nationalism than in the progress and development of the country. Here again public opinion in France was behind the times, existing upon ready-made ideas, upon a conception of things and a vision of Europe which was fifty years out of date. France must no longer be ignorant of her neighbours ; to know them is the best means of living on good terms with them. She must no longer estimate some above and others below their true powers ; events will then no longer leave her hurt and disappointed.

The expedition to the Tripolitaine, which led to regrettable incidents between France and Italy, and an aggravating state of tension, was also to facilitate, as far as public opinion in Italy was concerned, the renewal of the Triple Alliance, a renewal which might for a moment have seemed compromised by the assistance which Germany had surreptitiously given to Turkey. From that moment European affairs became more complicated, moreover, and in the most disquieting fashion. It seems to-day plain enough that the Italo-Turkish war, brief as it was, constituted

one of the three or four great events which were to shake Europe. The two Balkan campaigns followed it at no great distance. And Italy, who, by virtue of her conflict with the Porte, had gained a foothold in the Ægean Sea, occupied the Twelve Islands, and laid the foundation of her Oriental ambitions—Italy, with considerable skill and considerable felicity, had intervened whenever her interests were at stake, in order to assure herself of favourable positions, and to obtain guarantees for the future. After the Conference of London, and after the Peace of Bucharest, it appeared that the State which had in silence advanced itself and helped itself the most was Italy.

As regards the delimitation of the southern frontiers of Albania she had obtained the concessions which she had demanded, and had also caused the demands of Greece to be rejected. As for the islands of the Ægean Sea, bases intended to prepare the way for a settlement in Asia Minor (Rhodes in particular being a choice morsel), Italy won her cause in spite of the efforts of Sir Edward Grey, who doubtless remembered that, like the occupation of the Twelve Islands, the occupation of Egypt had begun by being “provisional,” subject to promises of conditional evacuation.

Finally, even in Albania Italy had played and won a difficult game, passing over her youthful rival, the Serbia of the Adriatic, rousing the Austrians against the Serbs, and perhaps reserving to herself, in the future, with the Albanian condominium, another “affair of the duchies,” a means of breaking with Austria at her own time.

In any case, there were those in Vienna who considered that it was not Count Berchtold who got the better of the Marquis di San Giuliano, and the *Zeit* wrote that the Italian policy had succeeded in "occupying itself only with its own particular interests," and that, inspired by the old Bismarckian methods, Italy had "fooled Austria while assuming the appearance of a loyal ally."

In short, by virtue of the events in the East, leaning upon Germany the better to safeguard herself against Austria, Italy had consolidated her position in the Adriatic, and, by penetrating into the Ægean Sea, had added considerable fresh progress to the great stride which had taken her across the Mediterranean, and had landed her in Northern Africa. She was a greater Mediterranean Power than before. But it was observed that her policy was slightly modified by these changes and expansions. France, for example, once more became suspect to Italy, and Signor Giulio di Frenzi wrote frankly in the *Giornale d'Italia* :

"There is to-day an antithesis between France and Italy. On the one hand we have Italy's elementary necessity of defending her shores by means of the question of the southern frontier of Albania, and the sacred rights of a treaty which has formally recognised her occupation of the Twelve Islands. On the other side we see unjustifiable jealousy, a tardy preoccupation with the interests of France in the East, and the impossibility of growing accustomed to the idea of Italian expansion in a sea which can never again be a French lake."



There was no need to take such symptoms tragically. Yet it was necessary to take them seriously. Obviously a new phase of Italian politics was commencing, a phase in which the problems of the Mediterranean would henceforth, it seemed, assume the foremost place. Germany immediately endeavoured to exploit this situation, to lay hands upon it for her own benefit. Germany did profit by it, and not only in order to renew the Triple Alliance; this renewal came about of itself, and the Triple Entente, with its constant preoccupation not to disturb Europe, saw in it the maintenance of the *status quo*, and therefore a guarantee of peace. Now the perspective which Wilhelm II in particular had in mind was more extensive. The moment seemed to have come to extend the Triple Alliance to the Mediterranean. Bismarck had years before refused this extension to Crispi, who desired it; for Bismarck's politics were pre-eminently continental. But since then fresh ambitions had awakened in the heart of the German people: "Our future is on the seas." Such was the Imperial watchword. Germany too was looking to the East, pressing forward on the road to Bagdad. And how could she develop a great Oriental policy without penetrating the Mediterranean—without seeking to lay hands on the Suez Canal?

The Imperial Government thus remarked without difficulty that Italy seemed to fear lest her establishment in the Twelve Islands should be contested by England and France. These apprehensions, it appeared to Wilhelm II, were favourable to his designs. At the time of the expedition

to Tripoli Germany had been seriously embarrassed. At the moment when she was labouring to recover, under the Young Turk *régime*, the influence which she had wielded in Constantinople under Abdul Hamid, Italy had forced her to take sides, thereby placing her in an eminently disagreeable position. Finally, whatever prudence and duplicity she might bring to the business, it was with the Ottoman Empire that Germany had sided, against the Italians. Public opinion in Italy was not unaware of this, and had been seriously aroused. Germany thought to see an occasion for repairing the annoyance caused thereby, and for recovering the good graces of the Italian people and the Italian Government, and this occasion she joyfully seized. She offered her assistance in Mediterranean affairs—of course, for a consideration.

Italy wisely suspected the snare. Whatever value she might attach to the possession of the Twelve Islands, she would not sacrifice her policy of equilibrium thereto, nor involve her future. It would seem that she had never more skilfully manœuvred to preserve her precious liberty of movement. She had refused Germany's suggestion that she should introduce, in the old treaty of the Triple Alliance, a clause which should treat of Mediterranean questions. But she took her precautions in another direction. On the 23rd of February, 1913, the Marquis di San Giuliano, Minister of Foreign Affairs, delivered a famous speech in which were plainly indicated the distinctions which Italy intended to maintain :

“ Before the Turco-Italian war,” said the

Marquis, "two great problems confronted us: equilibrium in the Mediterranean and equilibrium in the Adriatic. This latter is the problem which is about to be solved, thanks to the close collaboration of Italy and Austro-Hungary, the co-operation of Germany, and the large and pacific spirit of the other Great Powers. These powers are equally agreed to-day in their desire effectively to maintain the present equilibrium in the Mediterranean. . . .

"The possession of Libya has resolved, for Italy, the problem of equilibrium in Northern Africa, but it will certainly not diminish our interest in maintaining the general balance of power in the Mediterranean.

"Austro-Hungary also has interests identical with ours, which will reinforce our mutual friendship. The two allied Governments are fully aware of this identity of interests.

"The Mediterranean is no longer to-day, as in the days of Græco-Roman antiquity, the sole centre of civilisation, but its importance in the world is not lessened for that. On the contrary, the Mediterranean having become the centre and the crossing-point of communications between Europe and all the oceans and continents, its importance, from this point of view, has increased; no one has to-day or will have in future the right to call it *mare nostrum*. It is and must remain the free highway of the nations; no one can or may have control over it; all must enjoy it; and among the Powers, one of the first places has been conquered and will be retained by Italy."

If the allusion to *mare nostrum* was significant,

the insistence with which the Marquis spoke of the good relations existing between Austria and Italy was no less remarked. "Close collaboration," "identical interests," "mutual friendship." Never perhaps had language such as this, or terms so engaging, been employed in respect of the Austrian ally. And this was only two years before the rupture! It might have seemed that the time of Crispien was about to return, that Italian politics was abandoning the judicious equilibrium which it had for fifteen years maintained. The Austrians were so completely deceived that a Viennese newspaper stated that no speech more favourable to the Triple Alliance had been pronounced in Italy. However, a more careful exegesis of Signor di San Giuliano's speech enabled one to perceive appreciable distinctions therein. If Italy chose loudly to assert that she was not disposed to submit to any control over her actions in the Mediterranean, she indicated clearly enough, to those who could read, that she did not intend to introduce the wolf into the sheepfold, nor deliver herself into the hands of Germany. In his *Problems of Power* Mr. W. Morton Fullerton remarks with justice that Signor di San Giuliano had "established a neat distinction between the balance of the Adriatic and that of the Mediterranean in general." The agreements as to Mediterranean affairs whose persistence he confirmed were those which Italy had concluded with Great Britain and France, and all allusion to "German co-operation" was carefully omitted from that portion of the sentence which spoke of the equilibrium of the Mediterranean. Afterwards, under whatever cir-



cumstances, Italian statesmen had with subtle tact to avoid uttering any word or taking any steps which would be interpreted as even an implicit adhesion to Germany's designs upon the Mediterranean.

However, in the months which followed the speech in question the Germans were to experience several deceptive delights. An extraordinary state of things was witnessed, indeed ; a certain cooling of the traditional good relations between Great Britain and Italy. For the first time Italy no longer seemed to hold so firmly by what we have called her British maritime assurance. For the first time impatient words in respect of Great Britain were heard in Italy. This great change had a serious cause.

During the year 1913 and in the early part of 1914 Sir Edward Grey had endeavoured, in short, to induce Italy to evacuate the Twelve Islands. Sometimes Italy eluded the question ; sometimes she manifested opposition. In a note of semi-official aspect, published on the 12th of January 1914, under the heading, "England has not requested Italy to evacuate the islands of the Ægean Sea," the *Tribuna* stated :

"If, against all probability, a proposition of this kind had been made, it would have no other result than to disturb, in a lasting manner, the friendship which exists not only between the two Governments, but also between the two peoples ; it would, for the rest, have no practical effect, for Italy, supported by her Allies, would oppose it by a categorical refusal." And a few days later the same journal insisted : "Italy wishes at all costs, as a Mediterranean Power, to take

part in the pacific struggle which the Great Powers are conducting in the economic domain, and to assure herself of a position worthy of her in the Eastern Mediterranean. Here is an interest which is vital to Italy, and she will on no account renounce it."

This interest was regarded as so vital that in May 1914 the Marquis di San Giuliano announced in the Chamber that he had requested an explanation from the British Government in respect of certain remarks uttered by Sir Edward Grey regarding the question of the Twelve Islands. Of course Italy—as she has proved—had no intention of breaking with England. Still less did she desire to enter into conflict with her. But her policy was affected by the confidence which she derived from her own powers, and from the slight decline which was making itself felt in other directions. She did not intend to be subordinated to any Power. She asserted her desire to be treated as a major party. This is an important omen, which must be remembered in time to come.

. . . . .

The international events of the first few months of 1914 assuredly did not seem likely to announce the successful developments of Italian policy which we have seen accomplished. Those observers who saw the European war approaching with rapid strides remarked, not without anxiety, the renewal of intimacy which appeared in the relations between Italy and Austria. The incidents of Trieste and the rivalry of the two

Powers in Albania seemed to have left no traces. Austria and Italy had never seemed so harmoniously disposed.

Toward the end of 1913 they had both made a comminatory application to Athens in order to fix the date by which Greece was to evacuate the territory in the Epirus which the Italian Government and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy intended to incorporate with Albania. Even close to the outbreak of the war, in April 1914, the Marquis di San Giuliano and Count Berchtold met at Abbazia and spent several days together there. On the 19th of April the news agencies despatched the following news :

“The Marquis di San Giuliano has sent, from Nabresina, a telegram to Count Berchtold, in which he thanks him in the most cordial manner for the pleasant days which they spent together at Abbazia.

“Count Berchtold has replied by a telegram in which he expresses, in phrases full of cordiality, the great pleasure which the visit of the Marquis di San Giuliano has afforded him.”

At the same time a message was despatched from Rome :

“The newspapers in general, while observing a certain reserve as regards the results of the interview at Abbazia, which referred to the internal policy of Austria in respect of the Italians of the Empire, appear to be convinced that it will reinforce and extend the common activity of the Triple Alliance in the international domain.”

Finally, Herr Bethmann-Hollweg addressed

the following telegram from Corfu, where he was in attendance on Wilhelm II, to the Marquis di San Giuliano :

“Pray accept my best thanks for the friendly telegram which you and Count Berchtold have just sent me. In warmly congratulating you upon the happy results of your conversations at Abbazia, I can but concur in the feelings of satisfaction which you are experiencing, and it is a real pleasure to renew, on this occasion, the expression of my sincerest friendship.”

Rarely had the Triple Alliance appeared so compact, so solid. However, those who—like our Ambassador, M. Camille Barrère—did not despair of seeing Italy follow a different direction in the event of a European war, had reason for their opinion, for they were aware of the complexity of interests which Italian politics has to face, the equilibrium, often difficult, which her very position forces her to maintain, and the circumstantial character of the decisions which she is called upon to form.

If there were unknown factors which might affect the position which Italy would assume in the event of a European war, one point might yet be regarded as settled, that Italy would not blindly or passively follow an aggression determined and directed by Germany. In default of other indications, one might have felt certain of this from the care which Bismarck expended in creating (for example, in the Tunisian affair) a situation which he believed would bring France into direct conflict with Italy. This seemed to him the only means of making the Triple Alliance operate as a single body, and procure for Ger-



many, as a matter of absolute certainty, the assistance of Italy in the event of a war with France. This case excepted, Bismarck foresaw that Italy would refuse to enter an offensive war declared by the German Empire. On this point he was to leave warnings of remarkable lucidity to his successors.

It would be impossible to state more clearly than he did in his *Thoughts and Recollections* that Germany would have been imprudent to count absolutely and unconditionally on the assistance of Italy. Prince von Bülow, again, in his *German Politics*, was to express the same reservations.

Yet again, like Bismarck, the ex-Chancellor of Wilhelm II believed that Germany could at least rely on Italian neutrality: "Even if Italy," wrote Prince von Bülow, "could not in all situations proceed to the ultimate consequences with Austria and ourselves; even if we and Austria could not throw ourselves with Italy into all the complications of the wheels of world-politics, yet the existence of the Alliance would nevertheless prevent any one of the three Powers from ranging itself on the side of the adversary of the two other Powers. This is what Prince Bismarck had in mind when he said, one day, that it was enough for him that an Italian corporal, with the Italian flag and a drum at hand, should face to the west—that is, against France—and not to the east—that is, in the direction of Austria."

How little are diplomatic dogmas to be trusted! It was a dogma, in the years which

divided the foundation of the Italian kingdom from the war of 1870, that in case of a great European conflict Italy could not remain neutral. In support of it Machiavelli was quoted, and the policy of the Dukes of Savoy. Proudhon, who was in this instance mistaken, said :

“ In any conflict in which the Great Powers were engaged Italy could not remain neutral and abstain from the conflict, as Switzerland and Spain would do. . . . Italy would enter into the campaign, simply because her intervention in the Crimea was successful, and because of this ancient maxim of the House of Savoy, still widely credited to-day, that neutrals are generally sacrificed, and that peace is always concluded at their expense.”<sup>1</sup>

Italy, which remained neutral in 1870, intervened in 1915, and in both cases she was to give the lie to numerous auguries. But her intervention was not mechanically determined. Nothing rendered it absolutely necessary, neither did it

<sup>1</sup> The European war has brought so many elements into play that its complete history will be very difficult to write. It is the same with the political and diplomatic history of the months which immediately preceded the conflict. Thus, according to evidence of the highest order which has come to our knowledge, the interview at Abbazia was not what Count Berchtold and Herr Bethmann-Hollweg would have had Europe believe. The Marquis di San Giuliano left Abbazia alarmed by the Serbian question, convinced of the imminence of a serious crisis, and resolved above all else to avoid making war beside Austria and against England. The attempts made by his allies to enlist him had put the Minister on his guard. They had inspired him with such uneasiness that the contrary effect to that calculated by his interlocutor was produced. This is not the only occasion on which Austro-German diplomacy has taken the desire for the reality.

come about of itself. Men's wills were needed to produce it. Certain events also were needful, which we shall now relate, and which will mark a red-letter day in the politics and history of Italy.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE HISTORIC MONTH IN ITALY

(May 1915)

The aspect of Rome after the great days of May—A drama of the national conscience—The protagonists of intervention—Baron Sonnino and Article VII—From Count Berchtold to Baron Burian—A great statesman who is a great and honest man: Signor Salandra—A diplomatic “sixteen-inch shell”: the Bülow mission—A return from the Parliamentary Elba: Signor Giolitti—“Down with the *parecchio!*”—Gabriele d’Annunzio takes the field—Poet *versus* Parliamentarian—Rome in an uproar—The appeal to the King—The liberty of the Crown—The victory of Italian Nationalism.

ON arriving in Rome in the month of June, some days after Italy’s declaration of war upon Austria, the traveller already familiar with the city was inclined at first sight to see nothing unusual in the appearance of Rome. In the streets, to be sure, there was much more movement than is usual during the summer season; above all, there were more uniforms, and these were noted and saluted with patriotic pride by the passers-by; and under the olive-green campaigning kit, so neat and sober and so military in appearance, people were pointing out children of the *terre irredente*, like the son of the *podestà* of Fiume, who, with so many more of his compatriots, had



hastened into Italy in order to fight Austria, and to help to liberate his native soil . . . and this protracted, animated Roman summer—a season commonly more languid—did not affect the pavements merely. Among the representatives of Roman society the traveller noted more well-known faces than is usual in the hot season. The Romans, this year, had sacrificed their holidays, or considerably abbreviated them. They preferred to feel that they were united, near their duty, and where news was available. They felt an inclination to live as far as possible in common during these months of war and these days of excitement. I might instance a great friend of France who resolved to remain by the Tiber “until victory,” and who, for the first time in his life, was going to spend the summer in his palace; a delightful retreat, for that matter, where one is welcomed with incomparable charm; a retreat so rich in books and works of art that one would brave therein all the ardours of the Roman sun without fear and even with delight.

However, on observing the city more closely one quickly discovered certain symptoms which were more worthy of attention and more novel. Evidently a great wave had swept through the city, leaving visible traces. The eye discovered, for example, in many side-streets, and even on the walls of the larger and more frequented thoroughfares, inscriptions, *graffiti* in the fashion of antiquity, devoting such or such a politician to execration. Again, in the newspaper kiosks and the shops where postcards and engravings were sold, there were reproductions of drawings and caricatures in which the same personages were

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represented in the most unkind and insulting manner. Who, for instance, is the public man who is here represented as a Calabrian bandit, waiting behind a tree, carbine in hand, to assassinate Madame Italy, who is coming down the road ?

But here he is again ; you may know him by his curving nose, his fierce white moustache, and his broad Piedmontese shoulders. And the ancient Garibaldi raises an accusing finger, and, while in the distance the profiles of the Germanic Emperors may be seen, the legend makes the national hero say : " I drove one of them out, and you want to bring two in ! " Another picture finally shows the unpopular personage lying in a coffin. This time his work is done. Wilhelm II and Francis Joseph are weeping over his remains ; and the legend reads, *Rimpianti !* (Regrets !). In a corner is a sack of golden coins, on which is inscribed the famous word, *Parecchio !* . . . Such is the severity, one may even say the ferocity, with which public opinion, when victorious, treated the partisans of neutrality and their chieftain.

Now here, on the other hand, are those who have won love and popularity. Portraits of the king and the royal family are everywhere ; portraits of Signor Salandra too, and Baron Sonnino, and of the military leaders : General Cadorna, venerated beyond the Alps as General Joffre is in France ; the Duke of the Abruzzi, loved for his wit and valour, and because he incarnates the hope which the nation has put in its navy, the great Adriatic and Mediterranean dream. We must not forget, above all, the innumerable por-

traits of Signor Gabriele d'Annunzio, the singer of this war of deliverance and expansion. . . . In our days the Capitol and the Tarpeian Rock have been transported to the publishers. And to this Capitol the people of Rome send up those who took the initiative of the rupture with the Triple Alliance. From this Rock they hurl those who have supported the party of neutrality.

Thus, for the foreigner who entered Rome, those events of which the capital had been the theatre in the preceding month began to explain themselves even before inquiry could be made: those manifestations of which the telegraph had given the world a succinct, insufficient, rather confused account.

Finally, although the inhabitants of the city still preserved the Roman gravity and dignity which nothing seems able to disturb, a little observation enabled one to perceive that men's minds had recently been swept by great passions. The storm had sunk, but ripples still appeared on the surface of the flood. In the evening, in the open places, it is the custom of the Roman to assemble and "hold a forum." In these days one felt that the forum was tingling with recent conflicts. A cry, a rumour, an incident of the street—a foreigner, suspected of espionage, a pessimist roughly requested to cease from propagating his alarming suggestions—and immediately the popular wave showed a tendency once more to rear its head.

All these phenomena of the superficial life of the city grouped themselves together, became luminous, and assumed an intense significance when one presently discovered the fact that

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Rome, during the last few weeks, had in reality been bearing herself like a true capital, the heart and brain of a whole people, and had been living through the most decisive days ever known to her since she first served as the seat of the Government of the new Italy.

. . . . .

Massimo d'Azeglio wrote, in the year 1859, a year which in some respects affords many points of comparison with the times in which we live, the following unaffected lines to one of his French friends :

“ People will censure the ambition of Victor Emmanuel ; it is quite simple ; the shrewdest would be overcome by it. Yet I, who know the king—if you would know how it makes me laugh, to think of Victor Emmanuel devoured by ambition ! No, that would explain nothing. We can only admit that there are inevitable impulses, antagonisms as well as affinities, which are willed by the nature of things, and that at certain moments great revivals take place. Why ? Because they are in every man's heart and brain.”

These lines were written more than fifty years ago. And the psychological explanation which Massimo d'Azeglio then offered of the events which he had witnessed, of the movement which was impelling Italy to take yet another step toward her unification—this explanation is still valid, still correct. No, it was certainly not ambition which led Victor Emmanuel III into war, and this motive is as alien to the King of Italy as it was to his grandfather, the King of Sardinia merely. Victor Emmanuel III is a



conscientious, thoughtful prince, moderate, and incapable of acting upon any other motives than the security, interest, and honour of the State of which he is the head. And if, during the days of May 1915, when a whole people turned to him, appealing to his supreme arbitration—if the King then formed the decisions and uttered the words which heralded the war—it was because he was able—as the first King of Italy was able—to understand the aspirations of the country, and to make himself the interpreter of the sentiments which, in d'Azeglio's words, were in the heart and the mind of each and all.

So the drama of the national conscience which was performed in Rome already revealed its two protagonists: on the one hand, the King; on the other, the people. But there were many additional actors. We shall see these appear as the tragedy is unfolded—the tragedy which was resolved on the 24th of May by the solemn rupture with Austria.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, whom Signor Salandra, on succeeding to Signor Giolitti, had been anxious to leave in his place, died, after a brief illness, on the 16th of October, 1914. A highly complex personality, more than a little mysterious, was the Marquis di San Giuliano. To-day the Germans would like to make him pass for a convinced and absolute "Triplicist." They loudly lamented his loss, and Count Reventlow has recently gone so far as to state that the Italian interventionists did not shrink from employing the poisons of the Borgias in order to suppress the Minister who stood in the way of a war against Austria. This is the sort of mon-

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strous fable which the Germans, in their disappointment and their rage, have not ceased to invent for the last year or more, as much for consumption by their own public as for the benefit of neutrals.

In reality the Marquis di San Giuliano (who succumbed—need we say?—to a clearly defined attack of uræmia) had not always enjoyed the favour and the confidence of Germany. Ten years ago the Germanic press attacked him violently for having sent the Marquis Visconti-Venosta as a delegate to the Algeçiras Conference; a *grand seigneur*, always full of sympathy for France, who died just as his ideal was about to be accomplished. Visconti-Venosta was largely to contribute toward turning the Conference, so brutally demanded by the Imperial Government, against Germany. He was to sketch, at this Conference, a European league of resistance against the German pretensions to hegemony: that diplomatic coalition which Prince Bülow pretended to qualify contemptuously as “the much-overrated constellation of Algeçiras,” but which has nevertheless become the Quadruple Entente of to-day. Later still, the Marquis di San Giuliano once again incurred the wrath of the German press, when the campaign in Tripoli was decided and war declared upon Turkey. On the other hand, he was high in Germany’s favour when he signed the renewal of the Triple Alliance, and when, in February 1913, he delivered the great speech outlining a programme which seemed to announce the extension of the Triple Alliance, which until then had been purely continental, to maritime questions,

and to promise the collaboration of Italy with Germany and Austria in the Mediterranean.

In short, the long management of Italy's foreign affairs by the Marquis di San Giuliano, whose ministry was extremely eventful and fertile in results, had as its principle a kind of equilibrium between the Central Empires and the Triple Entente. The declaration of neutrality made by Italy on the 3rd of August 1914 was the natural corollary of this equilibrium. But it was not easy, in the midst of this policy, to read the fundamental idea of the Marquis di San Giuliano. We may even believe that he rather liked to produce an enigmatical impression. Had he adapted to the situation of modern Italy the famous "deliberate versatility of the old Dukes of Savoy"? Did he intend to practise a policy of discretion and postponement, with regard to the storms which he beheld gathering? One thing is certain—his mind seemed to shrink from decisions which allowed of no appeal, from irrevocable resolutions. Men who knew him intimately assert that the root idea of this Sicilian gentleman was scepticism, a spirit of doubt and inquiry applied successively to all the forces operating in modern Europe; Italian neutrality was perfectly consistent with such a tendency.

And if nothing gives us the right to believe that the Marquis di San Giuliano would have persisted to the end in his original point of view, that he would not eventually have taken the path which his successor was to take, in order to range himself on the side of the Allies, and with them to enforce respect for the European equilibrium threatened by the aggression of the

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Central Empires, it is none the less true that up to the day of his death Italy strictly regarded, in respect of the belligerents, the attitude of neutrality which she declared it her intention to preserve at the beginning of the great war. France in particular could not forget the loyalty with which this complete gentleman was to observe the promise which, on the 1st of August, he spontaneously and in person made to our Ambassador.

It is a singular thing that the Marquis di San Giuliano's successor came to the Consulta with a character and a temperament very different from his, but with ideas which passed as being very much more backward. Baron Sonnino had the reputation of being a "Triplicist" when he assumed the direction of foreign affairs. But had not Signor Tittoni also, the Italian Ambassador in Paris, been formerly described as a thorough-going "Triplicist"? And the Duca d'Avarna, Italian Ambassador in Vienna—was not he a *persona grata* at the court of the Emperor Joseph? Was not Signor Bollati, on arriving in Berlin in November 1912, welcomed as "a partisan of the traditions of the Triple Alliance and a sincere friend of Germany," as the *Frankfurter Zeitung* observed? Nevertheless, this was the diplomatic staff which shattered an alliance of thirty years' standing with the two Germanic Empires, and brought Italy into the war beside France, England, and Russia.

During the illness of the Marquis di San Giuliano, and for some time after his death, Signor Salandra had temporarily taken charge of foreign affairs. At one moment it was believed that he would assume this charge in a permanent fashion.



Whatever temptation he may have felt, whatever suggestions may have been made to him (for Signor Salandra's star was already beginning to rise), the President of the Council preferred to retain the portfolio of the Interior. In the meantime events were growing ripe. The European war was spreading to the East, owing to the numerous provocations which the Germanised Young Turkey was inflicting upon the Triple Entente, and Italy saw herself forced to consider the question of safeguarding her interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, where she has so many projects respecting the future. Public opinion displayed an increasingly strong tendency in favour of preparing Italy for all eventualities.

In the heart of the Government itself there were certainly divergences of view, for early in November 1914 Signor Salandra sent in his resignation to the King. Victor Emmanuel III, after a few conversations with the leaders of the Parliamentary groups, again entrusted Signor Salandra with the formation of a Cabinet. In this new combination, which was soon put in hand, it was immediately remarked that General Zupelli, a determined supporter of army reinforcement, remained at the Ministry of War, while Signor Rubini, whose opposition to military expenditure was a secret to no one, abandoned the Ministry of Finance, where Signor Carcano replaced him. As for Signor Salandra, he finally chose the portfolio of the Interior. Finally Baron Sonnino was summoned to the Consulta.

It is reported that Prince von Bülow, in the course of his difficult negotiations with Baron Sonnino, a formidable adversary, exclaimed one

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day, feigning a genial humour which imperfectly concealed his vexation : " In a country of chatter-boxes I have to deal with the only man who does not speak ! " And indeed Baron Sonnino, who, by the way, when he pleases, knows very well how to speak, is endowed with a truly British frigidity—which is not surprising when one considers his origin ; an Anglo-Saxon on his mother's side, he combines an imperturbable composure with an Italian vivacity of mind. It is curious to remember now, after the event, that Baron Sonnino's appointment to the Consulta first of all disappointed the Nationalist elements and the deputies of the Left, who were already partisans of an energetic policy of intervention against Austria and Germany, and were alarmed by his reputation as a " Triplicist."

Baron Sonnino let them talk. He allowed himself to be regarded as a sphinx. During the whole of November he watched events, studying the European problem from the Italian point of view. On the 9th of December, by means of the telegram to the Duca d'Avarna with which the *Green Book* commences, he led Italian politics into a new path, by demanding of Austria that she should respect Article VII of the treaty of the Triple Alliance, an article which foresaw the possibility that Austro-Hungary might disturb the equilibrium of the Balkans, and which justified Italy in demanding compensation for herself. From that moment Italy was moving toward a rupture and war. The die was cast.

We may say that the wording of this Article VII—which was drafted with great foresight and extreme skill—was a determining factor of Italy's

decision. Over a distance of more than thirty years the Italian negotiators of the Triple Alliance had reserved the future of their country, had safeguarded its liberty, by inserting in the treaty the cancelling clause which assured Italy of justice in her future difficulties with the Vienna Government, procuring her the means of breaking justly and honourably with her ancient Allies. This text, the bearing of which had been so well calculated, and whose effect was to be so certain, reminds one of the most famous examples of this kind recorded in the history of treaties. It is as valuable as the famous "in consideration of" in the Peace of the Pyrenees, which enabled Louis XIV to put an end to the scheme of Spain. It is as good as the "then and in this case" of which the Emperor Leopold, at the beginning of the wars of the Revolution, said that for him it was the law and the prophets. So was Article VII the law and the prophets for Baron Sonnino.

. . . . .

However, Baron Sonnino had acted according to the indications which Signor Salandra and himself had obtained from the internal politics of the country and from public opinion. The great regularity and moderation of his procedure was made manifest by the stages which led to intervention.

On the 3rd of December 1914 the reconstructed Ministry made its bow to the Chambers, and Signor Salandra delivered a great speech, of the nature of a programme, which hinted that Italy was on the point of striking out on a new path. Amid the applause of the assembly,

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Signor Salandra asserted that the first duty of the Government must be "the vigilant care of the future destinies of Italy in the world." And developing this idea, he showed that at no moment of history had the future of the nations been more gravely involved; never had the problems of the morrow been so urgent, so imperious. "Neutrality, freely proclaimed and loyally observed," cried the President of the Council, "is not enough to guarantee us from the consequences of the upheaval which day by day grows completer, and whose end it is given to no one to foresee. On the land and on the seas of the ancient continent, whose political configuration is now being transformed, Italy has vital rights to safeguard, just aspirations to assert and maintain; she has her position as a Great Power to preserve intact; more, she must so contrive that this position shall not be diminished by comparison with the possible aggrandisements of other States. It follows from this that our neutrality cannot remain inert and flabby; it must be active and vigilant; not impotent, but strongly armed and ready for every eventuality."

These words were warmly welcomed by the Chamber, which, to emphasise its sentiments, sent its greetings to Belgium. Did Parliament consider, then, that such a manifestation was platonic and pledged it to nothing? Very probably. But at the same time Baron Sonnino's speech was enthusiastically welcomed by the public, which immediately saw in it an announcement and a pledge of intervention. As Signor di Felice said, on leaving the Chamber (he is a



“social reform” deputy), “these declarations meant war.” Europe could not mistake their meaning. And the German press, on the following day, reproduced Signor Salandra’s speech without a word of commentary.

This great Parliamentary session was to be followed immediately by two extremely remarkable counter-strokes.

In the first place, Prince von Bülow’s mission as Ambassador Extraordinary to Rome, a mission announced and contradicted on several occasions, immediately became certain and official. The Imperial Government betrayed the peculiar anxiety which the attitude of its ancient ally was causing it, by deciding that no less a personage than the ex-Chancellor was needed to attempt a solution of the Italian difficulty. This return to activity of a statesman who had fallen into disgrace was indeed highly significant. Everybody knew that Wilhelm II bore a serious grudge against the man whom he had formerly called his “faithful Bernard,” whom he had made a prince after the Tangier affair, but whose presence had become odious to him since the famous “days of November” when the Chancellor pretended to take the sovereign under his protection, after having let him in for a public recantation and public obloquy. So in entrusting Prince von Bülow with this delicate mission Wilhelm II, it is said, made this double calculation: “If Bülow succeeds, and among my diplomatic staff I can see no one else who would be capable of succeeding, then I and my Empire will reap the benefit. If he fails it will be because anyone would have failed in his place.

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His set-back will diminish him, and my vengeance will be more complete."

However, the departure of Prince von Bülow to Rome was hailed with cries of delight by the German newspapers, and the *Münchener Nachrichten*, with perfect bad taste, spoke of a "diplomatic 16-inch shell." To which a Nationalist newspaper in Rome replied with severity:

"Philip of Macedon said that every fortress could be overcome by an ass laden with gold. It seems that the ass laden with gold should have arrived in Rome some time ago, but the fortress of Italian politics has not fallen. To-day Germany wishes to employ more modern and more perfected methods, in the shape of the diplomatic 16-inch howitzer represented by Herr von Bülow; but Italy is not a Belgian fortress."

Thus, even before Prince von Bülow was back in his Villa Malta, misunderstandings arose, and the national susceptibilities of Italy were—justly—aroused. Nipped in the bud, the mission of the Envoy Extraordinary was inevitably doomed to disaster.

The other incident precipitated by Signor Salandra's speech has remained a mystery even to this day.

Signor Salandra, on the Friday, had expounded his programme. On the Saturday Signor Giolitti spoke amid general attention. What declarations were about to fall from the lips of the most powerful man in Italy, the head of the Government for so many years, who was still regarded as capable of returning to power when his time came? Now Signor Giolitti did not merely state that he would support Signor Salandra

by his vote. He made a serious revelation ; namely, that in August 1913 Austria had warned the Italian Government that it was already preparing for an offensive movement against Serbia. And the Marquis di San Giuliano, in agreement with Signor Giolitti, had replied to Vienna that he refused to see a *casus fœderis* in a war declared by Austria upon Serbia, and that Italy, consequently, would observe neutrality, leaving the Austro-Hungarian Government to act at its own risk and peril.

This declaration of the ex-President of the Council confirmed the thesis of Signor Salandra. At the same time, it overwhelmed Austro-Hungary, whose premeditation was definitely established. But perhaps the press of the Triple Entente understood Signor Giolitti's words in a sense somewhat different from that which the statesman had intended to give them. On reading the report of the session at Montecitorio certain observers had already conceived a doubt. Had not a slight misconception arisen as to Signor Giolitti's real meaning ? Witnesses had remarked the quite peculiar insistence with which the orator had added that the refusal with which Italy had met the invitation of Austria had in no way disturbed the amicable relations between the two allied powers. Was not one therefore justified in demanding whether Signor Giolitti had not intended to suggest to the Chamber and to the public the idea that the Triple Alliance, having survived the incident of 1913, ought equally to survive the declaration of neutrality made in 1914 ? This at all events is the hypothesis which immediately occurred to certain

minds, and the attitude afterwards assumed by Signor Giolitti confirmed this hypothesis up to a certain point.

However, the Salandra Ministry got to work, strong in the approbation of the Chamber and powerfully supported by public opinion. The work of military preparation proceeded with redoubled ardour and activity. Baron Sonnino opened negotiations with the Ballplatz which he was to bring to their conclusion with immovable firmness, while Prince von Bülow, in his rose-covered villa, brought into action all the resources of his mind, all his means of influence, to prevent Italy from descending the slope, without suspecting—and this was his gravest error—that he was in this way to increase the national reaction against alien interference in the affairs of the nation.

The *Green Book* is both a political and a psychological document. Here, in the severe and measured language of diplomacy, is a dialogue in which two states of mind make their appearance. Count Berchtold is succeeded by Baron Burian; a *grand seigneur*, rather bored, slightly detached, by a Hungarian magnate, a more active and more rugged type; the conversation proceeds at the same pace, and it is always Baron Sonnino who leads it. In vain does German diplomacy struggle to intervene, to throw out bridges, to find the middle path. On the Italian side is an inflexible determination; a sharpness of sight which avoids every snare, renders every ruse useless, and discourages any hope of subsequent trickery. On the Austro-Hungarian side, beneath



all the ability of the negotiations, one is conscious of a resignation, a fatalism before the violence of the attack. Austria feels that manœuvring will do nothing for her, or will at most only gain time. She understood, from the first note delivered by the Duca d'Avarna, that her ancient feud with Piedmont was in force once more, and that a fourth armed encounter was inevitable. "Italy and Austria can only be allies or enemies." The famous saying of Nigra may be read between the lines of all the telegrams in the *Green Book*. Count Berchtold and Baron Burian engaged and broke away and parried, but they had to play the game of their powerful adversary. Prince von Bülow, who sought to direct this diplomatic battle, had as much as he could do to parry the direct blows aimed at him. Prince von Bülow proposed, and Baron Sonnino disposed.

On the 4th of May the Duca d'Averna, by order of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, placed in Baron Burian's hands the communication—it was in French—which formed the climax of five months' negotiations, and which notified the Austro-Hungarian Government that its point of view and that of the Italian Government were irreconcilable. "It is useless to maintain a formal appearance of an alliance which would be destined only to dissimulate the reality of continual suspicion and daily opposition."

This was the end. Still, it was not yet war. For Prince von Bülow, humiliated by his defeat, there was still one faint hope: that Italy, at the supreme moment, would recoil before the gravity of the act. He reckoned on the external or

internal event which would modify the intentions of the Italian Government and the Italian people; and he therefore redoubled his subterranean activities. Innumerable secret interviews took place in the Villa Malta, whither mysterious visitors repaired every night, like so many conspirators, betrayed only by the roaring of their motor cars, which startled the inhabitants of the peaceful Pincio.

Prince von Bülow employed all his talents, and his profound acquaintance with the Parliamentary and financial map of Italy; could he not hint, with justification, that he was himself half an Italian by his marriage and in his tastes? He is, indeed, allied to the family of that Minghetti, the precursor of the Triple Alliance, who in 1873 had accompanied Victor Emmanuel II to Berlin and Vienna.

Prince von Bülow made a serious mistake for a politician; he had the very German defect of nourishing himself to excess on historic memories. Why did he not rather look about him? The tide of popular opinion was rising on every hand. Already a few collisions had occurred here and there between "neutralists" and "interventionists," those Ghibellines and Guelfs of modern Italy. But the party of intervention was daily increasing in strength. The denunciation of the Austrian alliance was not as yet official; but it was divined, foreseen. By a curious coincidence, this event, known only to a few statesmen and diplomatists, coincided with the "Consecration of the Thousand," with the fêtes organised in Genoa in honour of Garibaldi; a commemoration which was held precisely at the moment

when it would be most likely to excite the sense of nationalism,

From the rock of Quarto, whence on the 5th of May 1860 Garibaldi and his companions set forth—Cavour complacently closing his eyes—on their adventurous expedition to Sicily, it was on all sides expected that the destinies of the new Italy would be proclaimed. Fifty-five years earlier the Genoese had murmured “*partono stanotte*”; in speaking of the Thousand they uttered it joyfully and aloud; but now it applied to the Italian army, with its millions of soldiers, which had become one of the great armies of Europe. The great departure seemed close at hand. The King and the Ministers were expected at Quarto, where they were to make the solemn announcement. And putting an end to his term of voluntary exile, an Italian poet was returning to his native country, in order not to miss this solemn moment. Signor d’Annunzio had declared that he would not return to Italy until the day of her awakening. Had he then any conception of the part that events would reserve for him in this awakening? Did he know that from the rock of Quarto he too would set forth upon his adventures?

We may say that while, during this day of festival, no one yet knew that the rupture with Austria was an accomplished fact, the entire Italian people, Europe, and the whole world was gazing at the historic rock. There, it was believed, the entrance of Italy into the war would be announced. It will be remembered with what mixed feelings the news was received that neither the King nor the Ministers would be present

at the ceremony; some feared a withdrawal, while others congratulated themselves upon it. Suddenly, however, the King's telegram of excuse brought matters to a head. Anyone who could read could interpret that message. Perhaps it contained no phrase so startling as the famous *grido di dolore* by which Victor Emmanuel's grandfather, in a similar case, had aroused all Europe.

But the King revealed his thoughts and his intentions precisely by evoking the memory of that grandfather; and by associating with the memory of *il Ré galantuomo*, and of him who was the first to "extol the unity of the country," that of the "Captain of the Thousand" who set forth from the historic shore of the Ligurian Sea "with immortal audacity, toward an immortal destiny." Victor Emmanuel II, Mazzini, and Garibaldi; this trinity, boldly composed by the King, was the symbol of the *Risorgimento*, which was again renewed; and it meant the fourth war of liberation, and the promise of national expansion; it was impossible to be mistaken. One of the leading newspapers of Milan, which favoured intervention, defined the situation by printing this simple statement: "Quarto marks not an end, but a beginning."

No one knew this better than Prince von Bülow. Informed day by day as to the progress of Baron Sonnino's negotiations, he had seen his hopes vanish one by one. He had burned his last powder in an audience at the Quirinal, when, perhaps—but this point is not yet very clear—he handed to the King an autograph letter from Wilhelm II, the supreme appeal of an ancient



ally. From this moment Herr von Bülow can have had no illusions ; his mission had failed. With his experience of men and things, it is doubtful if he could have found much reason to hope in the incident which was about to supervene, and which seemed as though it might make everything once more uncertain. Although he was not willing to withdraw from the game before he had tempted his fortune to the utmost, many remarks of his have been recorded which allow one to conclude that he no longer believed in the possibility of success.

However, it was no negligible effort, that of the last partisans of neutrality on the morrow of the Quarto celebrations. On the day when Signor Giolitti left his villa to repair to Rome—it was the 7th of May—the public opinion of all Italy, with its keen political sense, understood that a decisive event was imminent.

Even out of power—he had voluntarily retired some months before the war—Signor Giolitti was still regarded as the most influential personality in all Italy. The statesman who had entered upon the Tripoli campaign, had given his country universal suffrage, and had ruled over Parliament, where his powerful hand had merged the parties, and allowed only one majority to survive—the Giolittian majority—if this powerful statesman spoke, was it not more than probable that he would find a hearing ? If he showed a desire to return to power, was it possible that power would not immediately be restored to him ? In short, had he not delegated the government to Signor Salandra as to a lieutenant whom he proposed to replace when the burden

should become too heavy, should demand the return of the old pilot? And again, it was Piedmont, and not only commercial, industrial, and financial Piedmont, but military and loyalist Piedmont, which Signor Giolitti represented, and in which he was master; and Piedmont, the heart of the monarchy, seemed to come with him to Rome, to present itself before Parliament and in the Royal Palace. Taking all the elements of the situation into account, this move of Signor Giolitti's, whose doubts as to the best attitude to be observed by his country were well known, might have seemed capable of putting a stop to its intervention.

It is important, by the way, to give calm consideration to the reason why Signor Giolitti was so little disposed to accept the idea of war. His argument may be summed up in one word: the *parecchio*, a word which was so unpopular only because it involved a sense of belittlement,<sup>1</sup> and because the more general state of mind in Italy, being nobly ambitious, and looking toward national greatness and expansion, was hostile to bargains and calculations. Signor Giolitti saw the situation as a positive thinker, an economist who does not care for a gamble, avoids risk, and considers that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, especially when to get the two one must suffer all the uncertainties of a war, risk precious lives, and pay the expenses of a cam-

<sup>1</sup> *Parecchio* is a term employed more particularly in the Piedmontese language. It has been translated into French by "*quelque chose*." The true sense of the word would be rather "a certain number of things," or even, given the familiar character of the expression, "not a few things."

paign. More than one of La Fontaine's fables, more than one of Cervantes' proverbs, would perhaps have justified Signor Giolitti in this connection.

But there was another aspect of his case: Signor Giolitti belonged to an older generation, which saw the beginnings of the new Italy, which was acquainted with the difficult years, and which was naturally inclined to moderation and prudence. To such calculating minds the propositions of Austria were more than acceptable; they were tempting. "Let us take what is offered us for nothing," they thought. "If this *parecchio*, this something which will reward our neutrality, is not altogether the best that we could desire, it will none the less have the advantage of having cost not a drop of Italian blood nor a halfpenny of our wealth." These, to be sure, are arguments likely to weigh with a serious Senate, grey-headed, a little timorous, and suspicious of sudden enthusiasm. Such arguments are still more peremptory, irresistible even, to an assembly of stock-holders. Signor Giolitti reckoned that when the question should be debated in the Chamber it would be an easy matter, with his authority, his prestige, and his dexterity as a great Parliamentarian, to overcome all objections and sweep away all obstacles.

As for public opinion, he did not take it into calculation. This is why he brushed aside, as importunate and negligible babblings, the cries of "Down with the *parecchio*!" with which a few students in Turin greeted his passage. In Rome, however, he was, to his great surprise, to find that these manifestations had singularly

increased and were further increasing day by day. The public had a very clear intuition that once the question was in any shape or form put before the Chamber it would certainly be solved in a sense contrary to its desires; that the ex-President of Council would, at the first sign, recover his tried and faithful majority. There would be a sort of return from a Parliamentary Elba. The arrival of Signor Giolitti in Rome was thus productive of great excitement and considerable disturbance. And Rome was to witness this curious spectacle: the man who was lately the most influential and the least criticised man in all Italy, the strong-handed dictator, who had so long kneaded the dough of Italy's public life, was checked for the first time by a popular movement, a movement of the streets, which was to be led by a poet—which was perhaps even more unexpected and extraordinary, and certainly the very last thing which Signor Giolitti had looked for, accustomed as he was to reckon only with the psychology of the Assemblies and the usages of the representative system.

On the 12th of May Signor Gabriele d'Annunzio arrived in Rome by an evening train. The city was already over-excited by the rumours of the last few days, and the reports which were current in all directions concerning the "neutralist intrigues" and the "Parliamentary conspiracy." The Romans were all for the war and for Signor Salandra. The presence of Signor Giolitti in Rome alarmed and irritated them. In vain did Signor Giolitti, in a public letter to the *Tribuna*, assert that it had never entered



his mind to overthrow the Ministry, and that he had confined himself to responding to a summons from the King and the President of the Council himself, with whom he had to discuss the general situation. In this connection there is no reason to doubt Signor Giolitti's loyalty. Unhappily for him he had friends, and a clientèle, and he also found partisans for this occasion who were far less moderate and circumspect, and who compromised him gratuitously.

In the course of a few days Signor Giolitti found that he had become the prisoner of his party. His statesmanlike point of view, which weighed carefully and scrupulously the reasons for and against intervention, disappeared in the tumult created by the violent conflict of two ideals, two opposing passions. Signor Giolitti found himself overwhelmed. Rome was passing through one of those periods when the breath of popularity and unpopularity blows whither it listeth, capriciously and often at hazard. Swiftly it rose to a tempest. No explanation had any chance of a hearing now. Guelf or Ghibelline—men were classed without appeal, and proper names became standards of battle. Like Farinata degli Uberti, Signor Giolitti might have asked himself the sorrowful question: "Why does this people hate me?"

However, the same phenomenon carried Gabriele d'Annunzio to the head of the crowd which favoured intervention. That a subtle artist in literature, a scholarly poet, a writer of a refined æstheticism, inaccessible to the vulgar, should have become a tribune, an agitator of the

masses, is one of the most remarkable characteristics of this troubled period, and one that will be remembered by history. Italy is, in the modern world, one of those privileged lands where these metamorphoses still remain possible, where literature mingles with life, where all are accessible to lyrical feeling, where it is near the surface in all. We must recall Lamartine in 1848 to find a precedent for such a part played by poetry in a great political movement. But the poems of Lamartine, like his speeches, appealed to the most general feelings, we might say to the common ground of the human heart; while in Signor d'Annunzio's work all is erudite, even the language of the passions, even the expression of patriotism and loyalty. Anywhere but in a Mediterranean country Signor d'Annunzio would have been condemned for ever to incomprehension so far as the crowd is concerned; would have been doomed to the ivory tower. . . .

On the 12th of May, the first night of his arrival in Rome, 150,000 people had come to welcome him. From the balcony of the Hôtel Regina—facing the palace of the Queen-Mother, who, from one of its windows, witnessed the spectacle—Signor d'Annunzio delivered a speech comparable to the speeches delivered at the Quarto and in Genoa; a sonorous harangue, in which Nationalism was nourished by classic poetry and history, in which memories of the *Risorgimento* and the famous sayings of the Garibaldian leaders and warriors were mingled with lines from Dante. Signor d'Annunzio's first speech to the Romans had but one subject: patriotism. It was by the force of events that

his following speeches took on more violent touches, and the accents of civil war.

What manœuvres, what menaces, what influences were brought into play at the last moment, in order to prevent the intervention of Italy? It is still a mysterious story as far as the details are concerned, but the main outlines are abundantly plain. Did Signor Giolitti realise that his presence in Rome must at least have given rise to false appearances, have given the "neutralists" an argument and a point of support, and have even begun to exercise pressure upon the Government and Parliamentary circles? Parliament was to assemble on the 20th of May, to decide upon peace or war. By insistently spreading the rumour that the majority of the Chamber, still Giolittian, would not accept war; by putting forward the name and authority of Signor Giolitti, the "neutralists" disturbed the political world, weakened the Ministry, and destroyed in advance the effect of the decisions which the President of the Council was to make known. It no longer seemed at all certain that there was in the Chamber a majority in favour of a break with Austria and armed intervention. A little intimidation of the Cabinet, a little blackmailing of the Chamber, and "neutralism" might flatter itself that it would wipe out by a vote the results obtained by six months' diplomacy on the part of Signor Salandra and Baron Sonnino.

However, to the great disappointment of the "conspirators," this plan was destined to exposure; events were to take a turn very

different from that they had hoped. As happens to all politicians who see calculations of this kind miscarry, the partisans of neutrality had reckoned without the open air. They had elaborated a conspiracy of the lobby, conformable to the nature of things parliamentary. They had counted, on the part of Signor Salandra, on an acceptance pure and simple of the situation which they had arranged for him. They had forgotten only one point : that up to the 20th of May Signor Salandra had time to act, to create a situation which enabled him to impose his will upon Parliament by relying on forces alien to Parliament. Within a week, indeed, the aspect of things was on the point of turning to Signor Salandra's advantage, and he, playing a bold game, did not hesitate to make an appeal to public opinion.

On the 13th of May the report was current, and was hourly gaining force, that Signor Salandra, confronted by the neutralist opposition, was about to resign from power. The excitement in Rome increased, and at night the same crowd which on the previous day had acclaimed Signor d'Annunzio gathered beneath his windows and again demanded a speech from him. The poet obeyed the desire of the crowd. But how his tone had altered since the night before ! The text of this speech will be found in the collection of "Orations and Messages," which he has published under the title *Per la più grande Italia*. Beneath the headline, "The Law of Rome" it appears under a title such as a somewhat romantic Titus Livius might have selected : "Harangue to the Roman People in



Tumult." This "harangue" makes one think of those which Brutus and Antony pronounced in the forum in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*. On reading these pages, indeed, one recalls the most tumultuous days through which the Eternal City, in its long history, has passed.

"Comrades," cried the poet, "it is no longer the time to speak, but to act; it is no longer the time for speeches, but for deeds, and for Roman deeds.

"If the fact of inciting the citizens to violence is regarded as a crime, I will boast of this crime, I will take it upon myself alone.

"Listen to me. Hear me. To-day the treason is manifest. We not only breathe its horrible odour; but already we feel the whole ignominious weight of it. Treason is being accomplished in Rome, in the city of the soul, the city of life! In our Rome they are trying to strangle the mother country with a Prussian cord! . . . It is in Rome that this murder is being committed. And if I am the first to proclaim it, and the only one, to-morrow you will thank me for my courage. But that matters little to me! . . .

"Listen. We are on the point of being sold like a flock of beasts. Over our human dignity, the dignity of each one of us, over the brow of each one of us, over mine and yours, over that of your son, and those of your children yet to be born, there hangs the threat of a servile brand. To call oneself Italian will be to bear a name which will make one blush, a name which will make one hide oneself for shame, a name which will blister the lips."

It is not difficult to imagine the effect that words so fiery as these must have exercised on a crowd whose nerves had for long been severely tried. In this speech there was something of the ardour of civil war, and on the morrow, when the resignation of the Salandra Ministry was officially known, there was an outbreak of numerous manifestations of civil war. Two "interventionist" deputies, the Hon. Signori Pais and Faustini, did not hesitate to cry, "War or revolution!" in their speeches to the crowd. And indeed the premonitory signs of a popular rising were visible. And it is a remarkable thing: since the beginning of the European war this was the first time that a profound movement of public opinion had been seen in a European capital; the first time that insurrectionary committees had been formed; the first time that there was a threat of building barricades (they were actually begun in the Via Viminale). And here was a great sign of the times: there was no question of proclaiming a Republic or the Commune; but merely of protesting against a Parliamentary majority too ready, in the eyes of the people, to accept the proposals and submit to the pressure of a foreign ambassador.

The violence of these "days" was imperfectly realised in foreign countries. People had no real conception of the passion which had aroused Rome; and Rome was immediately followed by all the great cities of Italy. Montecitorio, at a given moment, was invaded by the crowd; and if the demonstrators—unfamiliar with the ins and outs of Parliament—had not gone astray in the corridors of the Chamber, whence the police

succeeded in ejecting them, if they had reached the Chamber itself at the first rush, it is impossible to say what might not have happened. Out-of-doors, however, notorious "neutralists" were actually being chased through the streets; it is a miracle that no blood was shed. A number of politicians, ex-lieutenants, and collaborators of Signor Giolitti, who, together with their leader, had for some days been treated with extreme violence by a section of the press, were recognised, hooted, threatened, and finally, with great difficulty, rescued by the *carabinieri*. Signor Bertolini in particular passed a very bad quarter of an hour, during which he was forcibly reminded of the affairs of various banks and railways. Presently the Government, which was carefully watching over the safety of all, was forced to advise Signor Giolitti, for the general good, in the interest of order, to return to his villa in Piedmont. Such was the effervescence of the public, and the language employed by the newspapers in speaking of him, that it might well have been thought that his life was in danger.

As for the more seriously unpopular "neutralist" deputies, they, on the advice of the police, passed the night preceding the session of May the 20th not in their homes, but in a hotel facing Montecitorio. To reach the Chamber without coming into contact with the hostile crowd they had only to cross the small piazza, all of whose entrances were closed by detachments of police. Here was a glaring manifestation of the discord between the nation and the Parliament, and there were plenty to make sport of this allegorical situation, which was humiliat-

ing enough for the "Giolittians"—the "Giolittian Camorra," as they were styled by the Nationalist press.

To understand the state of mind of the Roman population we must remember that the universal suffrage, at the last elections, had been divided between the Nationalists, a newly born party, at once reactionary, demagogic, and doctrinaire, and the traditional Democrats, the heirs of Mazzini and Garibaldi, the representatives of the Irredentist ideal, and the champions of the completion of Italian unity. All the forces of the capital, all its moral and intellectual elements, the aristocracy as well as the *plebs*, were thus marching in the same direction. The Nationalist-Imperialists of the *Idea Nazionale*, who flattered themselves on banishing all sentimentality from politics, and on considering everything solely from the standpoint of the national interests of Italy, employed the same impassioned language as the writers of the *Messaggero*, who were free-thinkers and "unitarians" of the old school. A sort of Committee of Public Safety was even constituted, in which the leaders of these two camps, the contributors to these two organs, met and concerted, and meditated, perhaps, if matters should go farther, upon a common political action. For forty-eight hours there was, in Rome, Milan, and ten other Italian centres, the equivalent of certain days of revolution during the period of the *Risorgimento*. Impatience of foreign intervention, the appeal to the Government to declare war, even the famous cry: "Away with the Barbarians!"—nothing was lacking in this revival of history.



The excitement and indignation and anger of Rome were raised to their highest point on the evening of the 14th of May, by a fresh public address from Signor d'Annunzio. The direct accusations and the precise information which the poet introduced into this speech made it a political event of the highest importance, after which there could not fail to be some decisive movement of public opinion. Here are the principal passages of the philippic. Erecting the crowd into a tribunal, the poet addressed it in these terms :

"We are assembled here to judge a crime of high treason, and to denounce the guilty man or men to the contempt and vengeance of good citizens.

"What I tell you now is not mere bombastic verbiage ; it is the precise description of an established fact.

"The Italian Government, the Government which yesterday evening placed its resignation in the hands of the King, had abolished, on the 4th of May, on the eve of the "Benediction of the Thousand," the treaty of the Triple Alliance. It had declared that this treaty, so far as Austria was concerned, was null and void. I can assure you of the exactitude of that very phrase : I repeat, it was null and void.

"The Government of Italy, that Government which yesterday evening placed its resignation in the hands of the King, had, in consequence, concluded precise agreements with another group of nations, solemn and conclusive engagements, confirmed by an exchange of strategic plans and by a scheme of combined military action.

“Such is the truth, the undeniable truth. I had certain information of these facts before leaving France, where the officers of our General Staff and our Navy had already arrived and had set to work.

“Thus on the one hand there was a treaty abolished ; on the other an agreement concluded. On the one hand the honour of the country was avenged ; on the other hand it was pledged.

“The coalition inaugurated at Quarto was about to be accomplished. Discussion was quieting down. The ideal necessity had overcome all the trivialities of politics. The Army was valiant and confident. Examples of civic virtue were beginning to shine above the tumult, now assuaged. The good leaven was already causing the inert mass to rise.

“And now the painful effort of months upon months is interrupted by a vile and unforeseen aggression. This aggression is inspired, excited, aided by foreigners. Its authors are an Italian statesman and Italian members of Parliament, who are treating with the foreigner, are in the service of the foreigner, for the purpose of debasing and enslaving and dishonouring Italy for the benefit of the foreigner.

“That is patent, that is undeniable. Listen. The chief of the malefactors, whose soul is nothing but a frigid lie set forth with cunning wiles, just as the dismal sac of the cuttlefish is furnished with adroit tentacles—the manipulator of this base undertaking knew of the abolition of the old treaty. And he knew of the constitution of the new treaty, both steps being taken with the King’s consent.

"Thus he is betraying the King and he is betraying his country.

"He is serving the foreigner, against the King and against the country. He is guilty of treason. And this is not an insulting manner of expressing myself, it is not an abuse of polemical speech; it is the reality, the truth, in accordance with the most notorious nature of this crime.

"This is what we have to prove to the country; this is what we have to imprint upon the conscience of the nation.

"Listen! Listen! The country is in danger! The country is on the point of proceeding to its fall! To save it from irreparable ruin and ignominy it is the duty of each of us to give himself wholly and to arm himself with every weapon.

"A Ministry formed by Herr von Bülow does not seem to have the approbation of the King of Italy. But whether full or empty the servants of Herr von Bülow will not resign.

"So long as they are not immured in their vile laboratories they will seek to poison the life of Italy, to contaminate every strong and beautiful thing in our midst.

"For this reason, I repeat, every good citizen must be a soldier against the enemy within the gates; every good citizen must fight him without let, without quarter. The same blood must flow—and it will be sacred blood—as that which is shed in the trenches.

"The Italian Parliament will open on the 20th of May. . . . And the 20th of May is the anniversary of the wonderful march of Garibaldi, the march upon the Parco di Palermo.

"Let us celebrate this anniversary by closing

the doors of Parliament against the scullions of the Villa Malta, by driving them back to their hypocritical employer.

“And in the Italian Parliament the free men, liberated from hideous promiscuities, will proclaim the liberation and the completion of the mother country.”

We may judge of the emotion which such language was bound to produce in the crowd, supported as it was by such exciting revelations, revelations of such an unusual nature, concerning the diplomatic under-side of the European conflict; the piazza once more became the forum where the affairs of the State were expounded to the citizens. And the good name and the honour of the nation were at stake. Not only was the accomplishment of the national destinies in danger of being arrested by foreign intervention; but Italy's engagements toward other Powers would not be kept. This was servitude; it was humiliation; and public opinion was thereby wounded in its most sensitive part: in the course of these fiery and tumultuous days the Nationalist ideal, which had been slowly preparing for ten years, and had been further developed by the expedition to Libya, took an enormous leap upwards. How many moral forces, intellectual currents, and traditions, which had perhaps been nourished in unconsciousness, how many conflicting sentiments and hitherto obscure desires, emerged and effected their conjunction at this moment! The pride of the Roman citizen—who in our days has revived, and not in vain, the symbol S.P.Q.R. in his municipal life—was mingled with memories of



the *Risorgimento* and the vivid notion which modern Italy possesses of her rights and duties as a Great Power.

What a mistake, what a false note, what a grievous defect on the part of Prince von Bülow, not to have understood that his extraordinary mission, his personal importance, and the suspicious goings and comings at the Villa Malta were bound to alarm the susceptibilities of the Italian people, who were still full of memories of foreign domination! The sense of national dignity and independence, which was so potent and so decisive a feeling in the crisis of May 1915, has found in Signor Guglielmo Ferrero an interpreter who has given prominence to its historical character, just as Signor d'Annunzio has translated it lyrically.

"Prince von Bülow," wrote the eminent historian in the *Secolo*, "attempted to overthrow a legal Government which he knew was inaccessible to his proposals. These are the methods which German diplomacy employs in Constantinople and Teheran, and which she used to employ in Fez before Morocco was placed under the protection of France. The ambassador who did, in any European capital, what Herr von Bülow has done in Rome must have been instantly recalled upon the demand of the Power to which he was accredited. This formidable crisis ought to make it plain before all the world whether Italy is disposed to allow German diplomacy to treat her as it treats Turkey, Persia, and Morocco, making no distinction between Rome and Byzantium."

These insurrections of Italian patriotism

against the Imperial representative, the *missus dominicus* of Wilhelm II, have often reminded us of an incident of Roman life, which occurred some years ago, in which three personages destined to play a part of the first importance in the circumstances which we are describing appeared side by side, united by those conventions of the world which assemble friends and enemies in the same drawing-room. There was a reception in the Palazzo Farnese. Beneath the magnificent vaulted ceilings, on which are painted the mythological deities of Caraccio, were the staffs of the embassies and the representatives of the world of Italian politics and the Roman aristocracy. There was also present a French military mission, commanded by a general who was to be Governor of Paris in tragic circumstances. How many, since then, must have met face to face on the field of battle, of those who that evening were chatting about the buffet—loaded with the wines of a Champagne which the German armies had not yet ravaged! On that evening too—in those days, which already seem so distant, when peace yet reigned over Europe—the French Ambassador had invited Prince von Bülow, as he had invited all distinguished foreigners then sojourning in Rome. Who would have prophesied then that the ex-Chancellor of the German Empire, living in retirement in his Villa Malta, somewhat as Bismarck, after his disgrace, had lived in retirement at Varzin, would presently be instructed by his master to make a supreme effort to retain Italy in the alliance of the two Central Empires?

Chance would have it that at a given moment

the French Ambassador, Signor Tittoni, and Prince von Bülow came under our observation in the same *salon* of the wonderful palace which is the home of France in Rome. What an interesting contrast between the fine, expressive features of M. Camille Barrère, and the strongly modelled countenance, lit by a glance of fire, of the Italian diplomatist, and the broad, powerful German shoulders of Prince von Bülow, surmounted by a foppish countenance, in the midst of which opened a large mouth, a veritable picture of the German appetite for conquest! Even when this mouth intended to smile it had an expression of wanting to swallow everything. The contrast between the person of the ex-Chancellor and the French Ambassador or the Italian Minister was a concise datum, an indication worth remembering. Let these three types of humanity be brought together in circumstances of any difficulty, and it was almost certain that Prince von Bülow, though by no means without experience, would be carried away by his Prussian brutality, his excessive confidence in the forces of Germanism, and would commit one of those mistakes of which the Latins are immediately sensible, and which those who have to deal with them should particularly avoid.

On this point the feeling of the Italians is unanimous. "Prince von Bülow," an ex-Ambassador of Italy informed us, "relied above all, and almost entirely, upon the opinion of a number of 'neutralist' deputies, who kept on repeating that war was a serious matter, a very serious matter. The hesitations of these politicians were no secret to him. And he proceeded to suggest

to them: 'What Italian patriotism desires, that I can obtain for you, while you need not run the risk of an armed conflict.' It was the part of Mephistopheles; Prince von Bülow never got beyond that. He stopped short at the epidermis of the country; he never felt the flesh under the skin. Which proves that although he may pass in Germany for a shrewd dealer, he is really quite devoid of real penetration. Prince von Bülow showed Italy what combinations and compensations were possible at the expense of other States than Austria. He pointed out the road to Tunis and the road to Egypt. And it never entered his mind that these temptations must remain ineffectual, because the Italians very soon felt that in a European crisis the enduring profit and the undying honour would be on the side of the Allies, and not with the Germanic Empires. To facile, inglorious and, for that matter, uncertain annexations, the Italian people preferred the conquest, at the price of blood, of the *terra patrum*, the soil to which it had for so many long years laid claim, so that an Italy morally and materially aggrandised should issue from this war with her ancient allies, while the combinations proposed by Prince von Bülow, however advantageous—and they were not greatly so—could only leave a diminished and—it must be said—a discredited Italy. . . ."

But before Prince von Bülow could understand that he would first of all have to cease to think and to feel as a German, or to retain in his veins a drop of authentic Prussian blood.

"One thing that was particularly intolerable



to Italian opinion," a popular tribune told us, "was that Prince von Bülow, the ambassador of a foreign State, should have professed to negotiate with a group of Parliamentarians, should have meddled in our domestic affairs, should have attempted to create, in the political world, a movement contrary to the activities of the Government. By so doing Prince von Bülow allowed Germany's schemes in respect of Italy to be seen through. He betrayed the mental reservation of our ancient allies; their intention to manage us in their own way. Italy perfectly understood this intention and would not suffer it. There was an outburst of popular indignation, and the war was virtually declared on the day when the Italian people became conscious of the foreign oppressor."

Prince von Bülow should have known, in fact, that few peoples are so sensitive as the Italian people to anything of a nature to make them fear foreign intervention or domination. Italy has suffered sufficiently to be aware of the fate of a country which has lost its national independence. The memories of the Austrian occupation are not so remote. And in a flash the *tedesco* was seen returning. The Italians beheld the "barbarians" recrossing the Alps, descending once more into Italy, according to the old historic aspirations which are still acting on the German peoples. The invasion was indeed approaching, although it had assumed the political form of an alliance and the economic form of a commercial and financial collaboration. Italy, for some years, had been beginning to realise that she had merely expelled the German—under his

Austrian aspect—by the door, to see him return—under his Prussian aspect—by the window. Hence the immense relief, the profound satisfaction which the rupture with the Central Empires was to bring.

It was only at the last moment that Prince von Bülow realised the extent of his imprudence and his mistake. When it was learned at the Villa Malta that the crowd had just held a sympathetic demonstration before the Palazzo Farnese, acclaiming France and the Triple Entente, and the French Ambassador, M. Camille Barrès, the patient and successful author of the Franco-Italian agreement, someone, thinking perhaps to please the ex-Chancellor of Wilhelm II, exclaimed that these popular demonstrations were without significance; that they were the work merely of a populace without ideals or consciousness, among whom *agents provocateurs* had been distributing money. But Prince von Bülow, it is said, recovering his statesmanship and rejecting the illusions of his circle, replied to these frivolous remarks in the most serious tone :

“Do not believe that a people will rise for a few pence. What is inspiring Italy is a great national passion, and it is against us that this passion has been invoked.”

This comprehension of the situation had come too late, and Prince von Bülow was displaying the “philosophy of the staircase,” or rather, of his letters of recall.

Among the psychological errors, the defects of intuition, and the proofs of inability to enter into the minds of others which the Germans have displayed in the course of this war the

historian will experience an *embarras du choix*. In the case of Italy these errors were quite supremely clumsy, owing to a complete misunderstanding of Italy. The Germany which was defeated in Rome in May 1915 was not merely the diplomatic and political Germany; it was Germany the historian, the intellectual Germany, so proud of her science and her masses of documents and data.

At this moment, when the popular excitement was reaching its crisis, the observer saw that the drama was approaching resolution, following, if we may say so, the classic lines. Italy was at the cross-roads; she had to choose between two policies. And who was master of this choice—who would be the supreme arbiter? The crowd, with an instinctive movement, turned toward one of the hills of Rome—that on which the royal palace stands. It was to the heir of those who had founded modern Italy that the people turned; he it was they demanded should interpret the national feeling. In him they placed all their trust. Thus, by the strictly constitutional method of the dismissal of the Ministry the crisis resulted in leaving public opinion and the monarchy face to face. Certain of the popular feeling, Signor Salandra was perhaps no less certain of the Royal sentiments. By bringing these two forces into contact his shrewd and opportune retirement saved the situation.

The “appeal to the King”—so we might name the last of these Roman “days”: and the King to whom the people appealed was the successor of Carlo Alberto and Victor Em-

manuel II, of the soldier-kings who had led Italy to greatness. Was there reason to doubt for a moment that their twentieth-century successor would follow in their footsteps? The princes of the House of Savoy possess military traditions: in their veins flows a warlike blood, and they have been soldiers and war-lords in all the great crises of their history. Moreover, for the last hundred years one idea has become co-substantial with their race, and has continually inspired and guided their policy: the national ideal, the ideal of a greater Italy. This ideal, one might say, has found its tabernacle in the House of Savoy, even as it has found its servitors there. The House of Savoy in return has derived therefrom its popularity and its strength. This ideal has been its title to the crown of Italy. It still constitutes its great *raison d'être*. As Baron Sonnino stated in the *Green Book*, as he instructed Signor Bollati, in February, to represent in Berlin: "The monarchy of Savoy finds its stoutest root in the personification of the national ideals." And Wilhelm II, better than any, ought to have realised this; for have not the Hohenzollerns known a destiny similar to that of the house of Carignan-Savoy, and has not Prussia, through them, played the same part in Germany as that which Piedmont has played in Italy?

In 1848, at the beginning of the *Risorgimento*, in the celebrated newspaper which took its name from the movement, Cavour, then tingling with youth, had written these unforgotten lines:

"When the hour of liberation is striking, it would be a cowardice to allow time to stand still! It would be not a great and noble policy,



but a mean policy, which without safeguarding us against existing dangers, would cover the nation with ignominy, and would perhaps undermine the ancient throne of the Savoyard monarchy amid the indignation of the trembling peoples."

These lines, written nearly three-quarters of a century ago, were reprinted during the critical days of May 1915; and the voice of Cavour, sounding across the gulf of the years, had lost nothing of its vigour. The House of Savoy found itself confronted by one of those historic moments which have come to it from generation to generation, and for Victor Emmanuel III, as for all Italy, a solemn hour was again striking.

Like his ancestor Carlo Alberto, to whom Cavour's adjuration was addressed, Victor Emmanuel III might assume as his motto: "I await my star." During the fifteen years since the death of Humbert I had called him to the throne, what opportunity had the successor of *il Ré galantuomo* and *il Ré buono* of manifesting his ideals and his character? Now, suddenly and magnificently, the occasion presented itself. The King, standing at the cross-roads, had to act at once as a constitutional sovereign and as a traditional sovereign. He had to resolve a Cabinet crisis which was involved in a national crisis. On the one hand he must act as the representative of the executive power in a Parliamentary Government. On the other hand, the will of the public and the urge of the populace invested him with a mandate infinitely more comprehensive than the consultation of politicians and the discernment of the wishes of the Chamber regarding the constitution of a new Ministry. The general

opinion had entrusted Victor Emmanuel III with the initiative and the supreme responsibility in the matter of peace or war. For the formula "the king reigns but does not govern" has never been understood by the crowd. In times of crisis, at all events, the crowd always tends to turn to the head of the State; to expect from him, if not to demand from him, decisions and deeds. It is related that on one of the most fervid days of the May demonstrations, the crowd having assembled before the Quirinal, the Syndic of the Roman municipality was received at the Palace, and that the following brief conversation took place between the King and the ædile :

"You come with the whole people?" Victor Emmanuel inquired.

A little uncertain of the sense of this query, thinking, perhaps, that it conveyed disapprobation, Prince Colonna hastened to reply :

"It is for the greatness of your Majesty."

"For the greatness of the nation!" responded the sovereign quickly. And the King has indeed fulfilled the two portions of the part which has fallen to him in the most national spirit imaginable; but—and he here displayed a rare versatility—he employed very different methods in the two cases.

In the resolution of the ministerial difficulty Victor Emmanuel III proved himself a consummate politician. This aphorism is attributed to him, as summing up his personal experience: "When the Ministers are strong, the Crown may be weak, and when the Ministers are weak the Crown must be strong." Signor Giolitti, whose

Ministries had formerly displayed exceptional vitality, cannot, in his conversations with the King during the critical days of 1915, have recovered the old atmosphere. And the King, having gone through the list of those available as Ministers, allowed them to take their leave, convinced that the only policy to pursue was that of Signor Salandra; having proved to them that if Signor Salandra had resigned it was an act of personal disinterestedness, designed to show that he did not covet the glory of attaching his name to the war; and having done so much the King had cleared the ground and solved the Parliamentary crisis: it only remained for him to recall to power the men who had denounced the Austrian Alliance and concluded an agreement with the Triple Entente.

So, by a veritable master-stroke, did the King constitutionally interpret the popular will. Without incurring the risks of a dissolution and a general election in a disturbed country, and in the face of the most serious of European crises, he had made an end of the conflict which was threatening between Parliament and public opinion. The political world therefore owes to Victor Emmanuel an honourable solution of the conflict, a pacification of which more than one Parliamentarian realises the value to-day. Italy owes to him the decision which has laid the whole future open to the Italian nation, and is guiding it towards its loftier destinies. The King has returned to the traditions of his house. He has been what was expected of him—a prince of the House of Savoy. For the country he has been the guide and leader, and, in the more

Roman sense of the word, the dictator. His personal prestige is now immense. The dynasty has never been more powerful, more firmly established, more popular throughout Italy. And once again, following the example of Mazzini and Garibaldi, patriotic republicans have rallied to the monarchy for reasons of national interest.

Are we justified in going still farther? Can we say (as some are saying in Rome) that the greatest service which the Crown performed for Italy under these circumstances was to save it from a revolution?

If Signor Salandra's return to power and the declaration of war upon Austria could not have been contrived—if the partisans of neutrality had won the day—would the popular demonstrations, which by the 15th of May had reached their highest pitch of violence, have degenerated into a movement of a truly revolutionary character? Certain observers of these events were of opinion that they would. "I have never so thoroughly understood the Terror," one of these confided to us. Princess X——, again, informed us that on the evening of the 15th of May she felt as though transported to the year 1793, when she saw a body of men of the people invading her apartments. However, it was only that some orators, who were followed by their friends, had decided that the balcony of the palazzo was an excellent platform from which to address the people.

But a revolution, in our days, and with the powerful means at the disposal of the Governments, could not take place without the collabora-



tion of the Army. Would the Italian Army have given ear to a *pronunciamento*? Or was there in the Italian Army anything equivalent to that Military League which a few years ago, in Greece, succeeded in changing the direction of politics? There is nothing to justify such a supposition, and the Italians are unanimous in rejecting it. At the same time, however, there are many who insist that it is impossible to say what would have happened if public opinion had not been satisfied, and if Signor Salandra had not returned to power. At the same time it is believed that if the "neutralists" had won the day they would have resorted to severe measures of repression, and even of reprisal. We have heard it said—though this may be an exaggeration—that Signor Giolitti, on resuming his dictatorship, would not have hesitated to have Signor d'Annunzio shot. So the King's authority may really have saved Italy, not indeed from a revolution, nor even from an actual civil war, but at least from a serious and lasting disturbance of public opinion, a disturbance infinitely dangerous at a moment when Italy, like all the peoples of Europe, had need of all her strength and all her forces of internal cohesion.

An Italian politician of great experience, who has filled high offices in this country, informed us that he had remarked that no one in Italy had raised the cry of war until the Government had declared itself. The nation was longing for war, but, like the Army itself, it was waiting for the royal declaration, the command of the supreme chief. These popular manifestations of May were above all an expression of national pride

wounded by German intervention, and of indignation caused by the intolerable feeling that foreign influences were seeking to force themselves upon the policy of Italy. Observers were struck indeed by the violence with which the idea of treachery took hold of the public mind during these days of excitement. It is enough to recall the fact that in May 1915 people spoke of "Bülow and Macchio" almost as they used to speak of "Pitt and Coburg" in Paris in 1793. Here, again, is a characteristic fact to be added to those which we have already cited: on the critical day of May 15th the clerks of the Ministries held a demonstration, in a body, in favour of Signor Salandra. That Government officials should fearlessly give vent to their feelings, and should compromise themselves even to the extent of physically maltreating certain politicians, would be a highly significant symptom in any country. It was one of the signs of that dangerous excitement which the King's declaration finally allayed.

But if the King had replied in the negative? If he had preferred the calculations of "neutrality" to the risks of war? Well, in that case it is more than probable that after a few disturbances all would have quieted down again. The King would have shattered the hopes of the patriots and disappointed historic aspirations. But no one can pretend that he would not have carried with him, not merely the majority of the Chamber and the Senate, but also, in the mass of the Italian people, the rural portion of the population, which in Italy as elsewhere is a friend of repose and the enemy of change, ready to follow

the impulses and suggestions of the great cities, which are in turn guided by their *élite*.

The Italians are not a little proud of the energy which they displayed and the capacity for action of which they gave proof in these circumstances. "The European crisis has revealed on the one hand peoples which have responded to an act of provocation; on the other hand, peoples which have blindly followed their aggressive Government. All have accepted a situation created without their knowledge or imposed by force of circumstances. We only, in agreement with our Government and our King, have chosen; we only have willed *our* war." So say the Italians, and rightly. It was in fact a popular movement—and this we must not forget—a profound and forcible popular movement which impelled Italy to intervene. And this movement found, to guide it, a national dynasty, and to exalt it, a poet. At the same time, politicians of the worth and calibre of Signor Salandra and Baron Sonnino, of a breadth of view and an uprightness which have never been surpassed in Italy, were to hold the reins of government during these decisive days. It is a page of her history which Italy will love to recall. This page, which was a sort of preface to and preparation for her national war, deserves no little admiration.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FUTURE

Italy's objectives—The "sacred egoism"—Italian realism and the principle of nationalities—Italy and Germany: why they both expect a declaration of war—Hypotheses concerning the part of Italy in a future Congress—The Austrian "cushion"—Threats of Pangermanism—"The war which is to establish Central Europe"—The future policy of Italy in the Balkans and the East—The future of the Franco-Italian relations—Reasons for believing in a durable *entente* and a lasting friendship.

ITALY knows perfectly well what she has done and what she desired in entering into the European War. She has clearly defined her intentions to herself, and has had, from the first, an admirably lucid consciousness of the objectives which she was proposing to herself.

These objectives (it is always important to remember) are four in number. Firstly, the recovery from Austria of the *terre irredente*, of Trieste and the Trentino. Secondly, the domination of the Adriatic and the maintenance of equilibrium in the Balkans. Thirdly, the consolidation of the results obtained in the Ægean Sea by the occupation of the Twelve Islands, the preface to the development of Italian penetration in the East, especially in Asia Minor. Fourthly, the affirmation of Italy as a great European Power,



liberated from all subordination, all servitude of whatever kind. It was in the face of the Central Empires, in the face of Germany, still so imposing by reason of her military resources, that Italy, in 1915, proclaimed her complete independence, her intention of joining herself to the peoples battling against an attempted hegemony. The latest comer in the high society of European nations, hitherto rather regarded as a younger sister by the Hexarchy, Italy, by her own initiative, will finally classify herself as a State of the first order. From this point of view her intervention will have been the crowning of her entire policy since 1870. It will even have been, so to speak, an aggrandised revival, extended to the European field of action, of the famous formula : *fara da se*. Let nations of the second class tremble before Germany. Wilhelm II will have learned that Italy, in future, must not be regarded as anyone's satellite. Only the imprudent will fail to realise that she is henceforth on an equality with the greatest.

Whatever may befall, whatever may be the outcome of the understanding of the Allies, here, for the Italian people, is the first benefit to be acquired. And this moral and political benefit cannot be taken from it. On the other hand, will it ransom, at the price of blood, the cities and provinces claimed by the irredentist ? Will it restore the Venetian Empire upon an Adriatic which will have ceased to be a "very bitter" sea, on which it will no longer have to suffer the neighbourhood of an Austria favoured by the best ports, by hospitable coasts and islands ?

These are secrets which still repose in the womb of the future. But henceforth Italy has foreclosed her mortgage on Vallona, that Albanian Gibraltar; and her possession of Rhodes is no longer contested. Materially speaking, she will not emerge from this war with empty hands.

One thing of which we must not lose sight is that the war which Italy is waging is above all a war of expansion and conquest. Neither France nor England nor Russia, to speak only of these, has entered upon this campaign with any view of aggrandisement. We know this well enough; for these Powers it is a question of defending their lives, of resisting an attack, a threat of destruction. There is here, at the point of departure, a sensible difference between Italy and the Allies. This difference in no wise affects their relations. It does not hamper the common work. But it would be a mistake to forget it. It is a fact which should be taken into account, as should all facts. It may, in this or that circumstance, imply a state of mind peculiar to the Italian Government and people.

We have endeavoured to show, in the course of this book, in what manner and in what proportions idealism and realism are combined to shape the politics of contemporary Italy. But this idealism itself, we have seen, has one dominant characteristic. We have seen that it is above all nationalist. "A sacred egoism"; this famous, historic phrase, which gave rise to so many hypotheses, and which Signor Salandra pronounced at a moment when Italy's course was yet uncertain, is profoundly expressive of Italian thought. Egoism, when it is the egoism of a

nation, becomes a duty and a virtue. It becomes purified. Does it not affect the fate of millions of living creatures, millions of millions of men yet to be born? Those Governments which have not this sense of egoism are guilty; they are dangerously mischievous. Those peoples who know nothing of it run the risk of a cruel awakening. But the Italian people will never find themselves in this case. It has set out for this war, for "*its* war," with the most definite idea of its interests. It was informed, and it perfectly understood, that it was not waging a war for the sake of magnificence nor for the sake of principles; that it was fighting for itself, but not for its neighbours.

At the same time it must not be concluded that Italy remained indifferent to the atrocities which the civilised world has witnessed during the last two years. Nothing could be more unjust; nothing could be more untrue. The fate of Belgium aroused public opinion to indignation. When the German armies were marching upon Paris, Italy was greatly distressed, and the victory of the Marne, which checked the invasion, allayed a cruel anxiety. Italy is far from being insensible to justice; but she objects to making justice and equity the absolute masters of her policy. She is by no means incapable of enthusiasm and generosity. But she does not care to be generous and to lose thereby. She strongly objects to sacrifice; so that this State, founded on the principle of nationalities, which has benefited in the past by the enthusiasm aroused by the cause of the peoples, refuses—and quite frankly—to obey this principle blindly, unre-

servedly to champion this cause. There is, no doubt (for nothing has deeper roots than an idea), an important section of Italian opinion which is still actuated by the doctrines of the French Revolution and French liberalism.

The presence of Garibaldians in the Argonne is proof thereof. *Il Secolo*, for example, which did so much for the cause of intervention, spoke the language of democratic idealism, the language of the majority of French newspapers. And this element has contributed to the movement which drew Italy into the conflict; but it was not the decisive factor. The traditional doctrines of liberalism were years ago discarded by Italian criticism. As for the public, it is extremely fond of the discussions of political philosophy, and they have been popularised for its benefit.

We can even remember to have read, two years ago, in a popular journal, over the unexpected signature of Signor Luzzatti, an analysis of the Declaration of the Rights of Man which was in parts extremely ironical, and which no French politician would have dared to sign, owing to his respect for accepted ideas and established doctrine.

Italy, who is fighting for herself in this war, is therefore in danger of remaining unaware of certain theoretical or sentimental considerations which, it seems, are still of value in the eyes of at least some of the Allies. For example, if there were questions in a future Congress of organising Europe in conformity with the principle of nationalities, as has often been proposed in England and in France, we may doubt whether Italy would find herself always and at all points in agreement with France and England.



As far as the East is concerned, in particular, independently of their special interest and their personal views, the Italians, with a fair amount of justification, are sceptical of the virtue of the principle of nationalities, and would be inclined to regard it as a factor of disturbance rather than as a means of pacification. Do not let us forget that these questions are of practical and immediate significance to the Italian; concerning peoples with whom they are in contact, and of whom they have direct experience. They do not believe that a formula has power to act like a magician's ring, and to bring order out of chaos. Above all they are not inclined to sacrifice either their security or their projects for a theory, and a theory which seems to them contestable. A realist in war, the Italian is even more of a realist in time of peace; this is a point of prime importance, an essential fact of which we must never lose sight.

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The question of the relations between Italy and Germany belongs to the same order of considerations.

It is often asked why, months after breaking with Austria, Italy was not yet at war with the German Empire, although she had given manifest proofs of her agreement with the Allies and had even subscribed officially to the pact of London. But it will be seen that if a state of war does not yet exist between the two countries, it is because Germany has done all she could do to avoid it, or at least to postpone the moment of its advent.

At the outset, the German press saluted the

denunciation of the Triple Alliance by an explosion of wrath. Forty-eight hours later the tone adopted by the press in speaking of the Italian Government and people was perceptibly modified. There was no longer any question of espousing the cause of Austria, even though she was attacked. A few weeks later Maximilian Harden even published an article in which he offered an unexpected justification of the policy followed by Italy. Everyone knows that in Germany even those writers who appear to be most independent willingly direct their efforts as those in high places direct them. Harden's article, therefore, had the value of a general and reliable indication. From that day, in fact, the German policy has been to walk delicately upon Italian ground.

Germany has many reasons for discretion in her treatment of Italy. Firstly, from the military point of view, it goes without saying that the Emperor has nothing to gain by an increase in the number of his enemies. A declaration of war upon Italy which was not followed by an immediate and energetic offensive, by an overwhelming campaign in the Napoleonic style, followed by an entry into Milan at the end of three weeks, would be serious evidence of Germany's weakness and the exhaustion of her armies. Now the Empire has no means of executing such a plan. Were Germany to declare war upon Italy, and then do nothing, or wage a defensive war merely, as the Austrians are doing, she would by her own action diminish her military prestige. It is easy to understand that she prefers to say that if she is not fighting Italy it is because Austria (to whom she has, moreover,

lent the aid of Bavarian troops) is abundantly sufficient for the task.

It is obvious, again, that Germany is anxious that when the moment comes for considering terms of peace, when a Peace Congress is convened, there shall remain at least one European Great Power which has not been her enemy, which she has not encountered on the battlefield, against which she has not committed the inexpiable. Moreover, from the economic and commercial point of view Italy was lately regarded by the Germans, no less than Belgium and France, as a sort of dependency and future protectorate. It is painful to them to imagine their future activities as limited in that direction. They feel that they are henceforth divided from all the other European nations by a river of blood. They realise that the resumption of normal relations with the rest of Europe will be difficult. They prefer that there should remain at least one great European State with which an immediate *rapprochement* would be possible without the interposition of atrocious memories and enduring resentment.

On her side also, it is true, Italy has not declared war upon Germany.<sup>1</sup> This is because she has no love of vain parade or useless complications. The absence of common frontiers between the two countries would have rendered the conflict theoretical. And this conflict, of no effect in a military sense, would have been liable to give rise to certain difficulties, notably in the interior of the country.

We must not blink the fact that the repug-

<sup>1</sup> Written towards the end of 1915.

nance with which the war was regarded, up to May 1915, by several elements of Italian opinion, did not give way without leaving certain traces. It is true that neutralism bowed with a good grace to the accomplished fact. It accepted the war against Austria. But a war against Germany would have given rise to other objections and renewed opposition. The Italian Government preferred to proceed by stages, leaving events to work themselves out. It knows what it is doing; its prudence is born of wisdom and experience; we must allow it to judge what is opportune.

It is not unaware, moreover, that any advantages obtained over Austria would be precarious and even illusory, unless Germany were vanquished, and thoroughly vanquished. Italy knows too, that in the event of a German victory she would fall into a state of subjection to the Germanic Empires, and that her very security and her territorial integrity would be menaced. Her feeling that the peril of the German hegemony exists for her as well as for other countries is lacking neither in force nor lucidity. A few voices, during the last few years, had already given warning of the invasion of the peninsula and the seizure by Germany of various organisms of the Italian State. The events of 1914 finally enlightened Italy and revealed the full extent of the danger of that political, economic, and even spiritual domination to which Germany pretends. In a little book which caused a considerable sensation, "Italy and the German Civilisation," Signor Ugo Ojetti vigorously presented the reasons why the Italians should refuse



to suffer the tyranny of Germany, either in the domain of the intelligence or elsewhere. On the other hand, numerous works, which have been widely read, have revealed and demonstrated the penetration of the economic life of Italy by German banking and German commerce. These revelations produced their mental effect. With her keen consciousness of her national and moral personality, Italy is henceforth on her guard against the methods of that surreptitious and persistent invasion, which Germany is as well able to conduct in a peaceful as in a warlike form.

However, although the suspicions and the perceptions of Italy are aroused, we must reckon with other considerations, which may one day tend to approximate the Italian point of view to the German. There is something more than mere chance in the fact that the two unifications, that of Germany and that of Italy, were coincident in history. They have interacted one on the other, and many political thinkers in Italy are of opinion that the kingdom would be endangered were Germany to be greatly weakened, or if she were to return to a state of amorphous confederation, or, worse still, the condition of a "dis-jointed mosaic." In the hypothesis of a Congress in which the victorious Allies should seriously undertake to ruin "Prussian militarism" by suppressing the very condition of German strength, which is the unity of Germany under the domination of Prussia, there are reasons to believe that Italy might be disposed to raise objections to a programme which would entail the renewal, so far as the Germanic nations were concerned, of the treaties of 1815 and the treaties of Westphalia.

Still, the question is as yet far from presenting itself in these terms, and it is hardly probable that it will for a long time to come present itself thus definitely and rigorously. The objection, which exists in certain Italian minds, is therefore practically negligible, and does not form one of the real problems of the day.

Contrary to a prejudice which is widely distributed in France, Italian diplomacy does not seem to be so anxious as has been supposed to see the Austro-Hungarian monarchy disappear. Once her old causes of difference with Austria were settled, once she was in possession of the *terre irredente*, and without anxiety as regards the Adriatic, Italy would by no means object to see the survival of the Habsburg Empire, provided it were sufficiently strong. If this Empire were to collapse, Italy would find herself in direct contact with a Germany whose power would be formidably increased, and that is a proximity she by no means desires. On the other hand, she has for a long time foreseen that the constitution of a Yougoslav State, which would follow the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, and which would appear on the stage of the world with youthful forces and fresh appetites, would complicate her position, and might well create future difficulties. Italy rightly prefers the known to the unknown. Hence the theory ingeniously styled the theory of the "Austrian cushion." Nothing, it seems, could better agree with the desires of Italy than an Austria incapable of injuring her, yet vigorous enough to serve as a buffer-State, interposed between her and too powerful Empires or exuberant nationalities. Owing to the same need

of equilibrium, Italy would not oppose the reconstruction of an autonomous Poland on the confines of Russia and the Germanic world. Here are the elements of a wise policy of empiricism and European conservatism. If, after the upheavals of this stupendous war, we are to witness one of those returns to moderation of which history shows us so many examples as following upon great cataclysms, Italy, working upon these lines, may find herself fated to play the part of an arbitress, which will singularly add to her stature.

It may also happen that events will take such a turn that the policy of the golden mean will come too late. After two years of warfare the schemes and views of Germany begin to appear to us with more distinctness. The dreams of European hegemony which were attributed to Germany were vague. As the struggle has developed they have become more precise. We have been able to perceive that the war of 1914-15 was conceived by the Germans as the natural sequel to the three wars of 1864, 1866, and 1870, as the war which was to complete the national unity of Germany, incomplete until Austria should once again, as of old, form part of the Germanic Empire. The essential ideal of Wilhelm II appears to be that which the Pangermanist theorists have adopted one after another—namely, the formation in Central Europe of a mighty State by the union of the domains of the Habsburgs to Germany properly so-called. The manner in which the Imperial Government has laid hands upon the armies and the administration of Austria-Hungary under

cover of the European conflict is a revelation. And if this project, so menacing to Europe, should be realised, with the consequences which it would necessarily involve—namely, the German hegemony in the East, in that Balkan Peninsula which professorial Germany has defined as “Sub-Germanic Europe”—if this should come to pass, who can fail to see how Italy’s policy would be thereby affected and the future of Italy compromised?

Europe has not taken the propaganda of the Pangermanist school with sufficient seriousness during the last forty years. From 1870 down to our own days, the theories of this school, which are far more practical than they seem, have constantly tended to translate themselves into action. Europe insisted on regarding them as intellectual dreams. But political Germany was labouring to realise these dreams, as Bismarck had already realised those of the patriotic ideologists of the preceding period. From the historical point of view, moreover, the sequence is easy to follow. In 1849 (when revolutionary Germany was trying to establish unity by the aid of liberal principles), what did the Parliament of Frankfort represent? All the Germanic countries, the whole Germanic confederation, all that remained of the ancient Holy Empire of the Germanic peoples; that is, the Austrians figured in this All-German Parliament on the same footing as the Prussians. But the Parliament of Frankfort was not to succeed in founding the national unity. Germany remained subject to the particularist *régime*, the system of little States, aggravated by



the rivalry of the two largest among them, Prussia and Austria. Liberalism and the Revolution had proved powerless to accomplish fusion. Germany, therefore, had to resign herself to see the old state of things endure—dispersion and division—or she had to accept the method of Bismarck.

Now Bismarck proceeded by stages. In 1864 (the year of the Danish war) he caught Austria, still a member of the Confederation, in a snare. In 1866, the affair of the Duchies having furnished him with the occasion of a rupture, he defeated Austria and made an end of Austrian influence in Germany. The road was clear for Prussia, who in 1870 united Germany and assumed the presidency of the new Confederation. What then remained to be done, in order that the last stage should be achieved, and in order that the ideals of the Liberal patriots of the Frankfort Parliament, which Bismarck revived by authoritative means, should be realised? The answer is obvious: to force Austria to re-enter the pale of the Germanic Empire. This is the achievement to which German politics has been leading from 1870 to 1915.

Let us note that Bismarck made early preparations for this result; that he rendered it possible by handling Austria tenderly after Sadowa, by not overwhelming her, by not making her irreconcilable. After 1870 he sought to consolidate his victories by constituting, with Austria and Russia, the Alliance of the Three Emperors. But as soon as he saw that the Austro-Russian antagonism was cropping up and coming to a head (precipitated by affairs in the East) he did

not hesitate nor count the cost. His choice was made beforehand. And he chose Austria. Thenceforth to support Austria against Russia and Slavism became the German programme; for Austria was Germany, flesh of the flesh of the Greater Germania.

So, in 1914, the German Empire undertook, even against the will of Vienna, the defence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire against Russia. If at some moment of those fatal days of July Austria—as some observers believed—realised that it would be wiser to yield, it was all too late; Austria no longer belonged to herself. Germany was deciding for her whether there should be peace or war. Austrian affairs were German affairs, for Austria is the continuation of Germany. And the community of arms opened a source of fraternity between the peoples. The idea at the back of the minds of the Berlin authorities—to reconstitute a compact Germany in the centre of Europe, a single State under the direction of Prussia—was stimulated by common efforts, trials, and victories. “From Heligoland to Warsaw, we all gain or lose as one person,” said a Radical deputy to the Reichstag, Frederick Naumann, in a book entitled *Central Europe*, which appeared in Berlin in 1915. In this the German politician joyfully states that since the outbreak of the war everything has tended to make Germany and Austria two vessels with an ever-increasing intercommunication. He reckons that after the war this result will be permanent, and that the renaissance of a great Germany, necessary to both Empires, will in any case be a consequence of the great European conflict,

and a lasting achievement. Thereupon all German Imperialists of whatever shade are agreed. A Pangermanist in spite of his French name, Paul de Lagarde had already announced, in 1886, "the war which was to establish Central Europe." It is this war which we are witnessing to-day.

Italy knows perfectly well that she would have nothing to gain were the Adriatic problem to rest not between her and Austria, but between her and a Greater Germany. She knows that the problem of Trieste may to-morrow be that of Venice, and the day after to-morrow that of Milan. She remembers that in 1859, after Magenta and Solferino, Prussia, and with her the whole Germanic Confederation, considering the affair to be a German one, declared themselves ready to support Austria, and, by the threat of intervention on the Rhine, persuaded Napoleon III to sign the preliminaries of Villafranca. Italy is too well aware of her own interests, and of her position in Europe, not to take into account the possibility of the creation of an aggrandised Germanic Power, which would be something resembling the Empire of Charles V. She must know that she would be its first victim, and the worst treated. Moreover, if Italy entered the war it was that she realised that her immobility would facilitate Germany's task, and would help to further her ambition ; and foresaw, enlightened by history, that a German victory would be followed by her enslavement, or even her dismemberment.

Thus the point of view of the solidarity of these two unities, the Italian and the German, appears outworn and archaic, superseded by events.

Germany closely welded to Austria, according to the programme drawn up by the Pangermanists, would no longer be interested, as she was from 1866 down to our own days, in the maintenance of the Italian unity. On the contrary, she would revive the old Imperial programme of conquests and settlements in Italy. France, on the other hand, who may sometimes have considered that the existence of a robust Italian State at her gates was an inconvenience, and even, at certain moments, a danger, will want Italy to constitute a south-eastern rampart against the Germanic world. Consequently, though a fresh *rapprochement* between Italy and Germany may not, in certain contingencies, appear totally impossible, the general trend of things and the logic of events make it a matter of only the faintest probability.

However, the Germans flatter themselves that they can always get hold of Italy again. With that imperturbable confidence which characterises them, and which the consciousness of their strength and the habit of success have developed of late years to such an outrageous pitch, Prince von Bülow wrote, in the chapter of his *German Politics* devoted to the Italian alliance :

“Germany and Italy cannot dispense with one another. They will always come together again, thanks to a host of important factors, to the absence of any rivalry between the two nations, or any disturbing recollections—the memories of the struggle in the Forest of Teutoburg and the battle of Legnano are disappearing in the night of time ;—thanks also to the analogy of their historical development, and the common



dangers which might constitute an identical menace for each."

Bismarck, who had more experience than Prince von Bülow, and experience of more difficult and more extensive affairs, was more reserved and less trusting. It was in reference to Italy that he described international politics as a fluid element which, from time to time, becomes solidified by force of circumstances, but which returns to its original state upon the least atmospheric variation. This is why, he used to say, when one State allies itself to another State, the clause *rebus sic stantibus* should always be understood. In his calculations and his assurance Prince von Bülow forgot to reckon with this clause in his dealings with Italy.

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"The Empire of 1871 is in process of becoming an historic Empire. In its place we shall see the formation of a vast Germanic Empire which will be merely the resurrection of the Germanic Holy Roman Empire . . . as it was in the Middle Ages, when it ruled over the half of Europe."

So said the Pangermanist historian, Karl Lamprecht, who, as he died in 1915, may have believed that his ideal was about to be realised. Before him Constantin Franz had already stated that nothing was "more essential to Germany than to gain the mouths of our two provincial rivers, the Rhine and the Danube." Paul de Lagarde again used to say that no people was better qualified than the German people "to exercise a decisive influence on the remodelling of the countries of the Lower Danube, formerly subject

to Turkish domination, and even the whole Balkan Peninsula."

The invasion of Serbia by the German armies, the march upon Constantinople, and perhaps, before long, upon Salonika, will have sufficiently demonstrated that Germany does actually proceed to the execution of the ambitious projects conceived by her intellectuals in her Universities. Moreover, was it not in the East that the war began? Was it not the realisation of the *Drang nach Osten*? Here again all Italy's views and ideals and her whole position would be unsettled were the plans of Germany to succeed, and were Germany to reduce the Balkan States to a state of dependency, to the condition, according to the phrase of a Pangermanist writer, of a "sub-Germanic Europe."

Italy's policy in the Balkan countries has principally consisted, hitherto, of rivalry as regards Austria and of distrust as regards the Serbs and the Greeks. To revive the ancient empire of Venice over the isles and shores of the Eastern Adriatic, to rule from Trieste to Albania, Italy had not merely to expropriate the Habsburgs. She gradually discovered other competitors. The Slavs of Austro-Hungary, descending seawards, becoming more conscious of their personality and their language, realised that they were not only different from their masters in Budapest and Vienna, but also different from the Italian populations which they encountered in Trieste, Fiume, and Ragusa, and which they are tending to submerge. In this direction Italian politics has become singularly complicated, since the moment when Italy was forced to perceive

that the problem, far from being reducible to two terms, involved three or four, and that the principle of nationalities, instead of helping to resolve it, merely served to render it more insoluble, the national entities in contact being irreducible, and their respective elements geographically intermingled in an inextricable fashion, likely to engender as many quarrels as exist among the populations of the too notorious Macedonia.

In a speech delivered before a deputation of Dalmatian exiles, who desired to honour him by the gift of a book devoted to the glory of their country, Gabriele d'Annunzio, in the spring of 1915, while forcibly expressing his opinion that Dalmatia must become an Italian territory, made no secret of the competition of which it was the object.

"This book which you have placed in my hands," he said, "is a title of possession. It is brief, yet it is of great import. It tells us, clearly and concisely, in the style of Rome, that Dalmatia belongs to Italy by human law and divine. Under the Latin rule of Rome, of the Popes, and of Venice, as under the barbarian rule of the Goths, the Lombards, the Franks, the Germanic Othos, the Byzantines, the Hungarians, the Austrians, the civil life of yonder shores, like the civil life of our own, has always been Italian in essence and origin. It has been; it is; it will be. Neither the German, coming from the Alps, nor the Slovenian of the Carso, nor the Magyar of La Putza, nor the Croat, who ignores or falsifies history, nor the Turk, who disguises himself as an Albanian—no one, I

say, will succeed in arresting the inevitable rhythm of accomplishment, the Roman rhythm. I tell you this, brothers, but you know it. On this Dalmatian gospel we may swear an oath upon it."

Germans, Slovenians, Croats, Magyars—these are the composite elements which Italy must confront with her claims, to say nothing of the Greeks, who, by way of the Epirus, are reaching out toward Albania. So we may imagine that the Italians have always kept a close watch on the progress of Greece, and that they have been disquieted by the development of Serbia, regarding her as a sort of Balkan Piedmont, the nucleus of a future State, and a State possessed of the power of expansion. However—and this is greatly to their honour—the Italians have not allowed themselves to be drawn into regrettable jealousies. Germany and Austria, in their spirit of division, would have liked to see them take umbrage at the Serbs and their "Greater Serbia."

They have sought to create misunderstandings between the peoples, to evoke "incidents" on the Albanian stage. It was trouble wasted. The Italian Government and the Italian newspapers met these attempts at provocation with absolute tranquillity. The Italians did not intend to delight their enemies in Berlin and Vienna by embroiling themselves with the Serbians for the sake of a few police operations in Albania, nor with the Montenegrins for the sake of Scutari.

However, at the moment of writing nothing is more uncertain than the destiny of the Serbian nation. It is in danger of a lasting reduction to servitude. It may, no doubt, rise up again from



its ruins and take its revenge; for a nation does not disappear when it is so rich in life as the Serbian nation. But in any case it does not seem as though the "Panserbian" idea can enjoy the immediate future which has been attributed to it. The spontaneous decomposition of Austria, which used to be a sort of dogma, and which was announced as an inevitable event, especially inevitable in the case of a European war, a great conflict between Teutons and Slavs—this decomposition has not come about. The Austro-Hungarian monarchy, above all with the support which Germany has lent it, seems to have greater powers of resistance than have commonly been attributed to it, and hitherto, amid the turmoil, it has justified Bismarck's verdict: "I believe in the vitality of Austria."

A Serbian State mangled and bled white is hardly likely, for the time being, to act as a magnetic centre capable of detaching from the Habsburg Empire the Serbo-Croat populations which it contains. This portion of Europe seems to be still fated to lengthy conflicts, to repeated convulsions, before chaos becomes simplified. Those who beheld the near future under the aspect of an Italo-Serbian rivalry, those who even asserted that one of the first wars to follow the present one would be a war between Italy and a Greater Serbia for the possession of the Adriatic, are probably mistaken, or have at least very considerably anticipated events.

By its very stupendousness the present war gives rise to uncertainty. It gives rise to so many questions that it cannot resolve them all. Of those which interest Italy in particular, a

certain number, it would seem, must remain in suspense. The Italian Government, it appears, has foreseen this future state of indecision, and this perhaps is one of the reasons which cause it to hesitate as to the best means of intervening with the Allies on the Balkan Peninsula. For Italy, situated upon the very brink of that huge vat of fermenting nationalities, any decision is serious, and any error might involve incalculable consequences. The obscurity and confusion and disorder are such that Italy, we may imagine, has need to reflect before engaging in one path rather than in another. However, if Bulgaria were to advance across Macedonia to the Adriatic, threatening Albania—if the ambition attributed to Ferdinand (who has not had Prince Boris taught Albanian for nothing)—if this ambition, encouraged by the Court of Vienna, were to approach realisation, it is probable that Italy would no longer hesitate; that she would refuse to allow a new competitor, a new enemy, to appear on that sea which, more than any other, is “her sea.”

According to all appearances, Italy has still difficult and lengthy tasks before her in the direction which she has chosen for the extension of her activities. When she entered the European conflict to realise her Nationalist and Imperialist programme, it was not repose that she chose. But she knew this; and it was not repose that she desired, but power and greatness. That is what she looks to obtain by this war. Of the conflicts which the sixteenth century witnessed between France and Spain the British power was born. The conflicts of the eighteenth cen-

tury between France and Austria engendered the might of Prussia and of Russia. For many Italians, it is the power of Italy which should emerge from the war of domination which Germany and England are waging in the twentieth century.

One last point is yet to be examined; one of the most absorbing, one of the most important. What, in the future, will be the relations between Italy and France? Here I beg Frenchmen of whatever party and whatever opinions who may have read this book not to be surprised if the reply appears to us to depend upon the lines followed by Italian politics.

After thirty-three years of alliance with Germany Italy has come over to the French side and is fighting on this side. We have already explained the reason for this development. The faults of our enemies have had a certain share in this result. Italy's definite idea of her own interests was the determining factor. The tact and perseverance of French diplomacy facilitated the *rapprochement*. And racial sympathies and intellectual affinities were far from devoid of influence. It is important, however, to remember that sentiment has played a secondary part in the formation of the new alliance. The Quadruple Entente is before all a coalition based upon a community of political interests, and united by a common peril. Let us admit that a friendship in which idealism has played only an auxiliary part will not endure by reason of idealism.

Here I address myself to those of my com-

patriots who may cherish a certain antipathy for Italy, created in the nineteenth century by the rupture of ancient pacts. I address myself also to those who see in this Italy the child of another law, the law of revolution, the law of nationalities, the law of nations. Conservatives and Liberals alike must realise that they are living outside their age, by traditions which to the Italians themselves are becoming increasingly obscured and forgotten. Theirs is an obsolete point of view, which no longer corresponds with the progress of the world and of events. In Italy a new legitimacy is establishing itself. The years, as they have lapsed, have reconciled many conflicting elements. For the Catholics themselves unity is an accomplished fact which no one dreams of rejecting; a precious conquest which no one would think of renouncing. For the democrats the Italian monarchical State has revealed itself, upon trial, as the most habitable of structures; Liberal aspirations and Nationalist aspirations find it equally to their liking. We should run the risk of speaking a language foreign to all Italians, and even of shocking our hearers; we should be unable to make ourselves understood, did we still believe in their former state of mind, that which belonged to their origins, their remote past.

In France, it is hoped that the Franco-Italian friendship will survive the war, and will not disappear with the circumstances which have revived it. If this is to be so we must not lose sight of the conditions under which the alliance was formed. Above all, let us not imagine that sentiment, which did not suffice to bring it about,



will suffice to preserve it. It will not resolve the Franco-Italian problems, any more than it will resolve those which will arise in Europe after the conflict.

The European war has resulted from the radical impotence of Governments to satisfy, pacifically, the needs, or rather the demands, of the peoples. Toward the end of his days, speaking before Eckermann of the convulsions which he had witnessed during his long life, from the Seven Years' War to the wars of the Revolution and the Empire, Goethe expressed the apprehension that Europe would again see days as troublous.

"What the future reserves for us," he said, "it is impossible to prophesy. However, I fear that we shall not attain tranquillity for some time to come. It is not given to the world to be moderate, to the great to permit themselves no abuse of power, to the masses to content themselves with a mediocre position while awaiting successive ameliorations."

One may ask to-day, with Goethe, and by the light of the successive events of the last century, whether the causes which engender revolutions are not the same as those which engender great wars. Both, perhaps, are only forms of the struggle for life. Who knows whether the desire for improved circumstances, so natural to man, has not been the spur which, from one day to another, has turned an almost Socialistic Germany into a bellicose and conquering Germany? This war, to which France has been constrained in order to defend her life and her goods, has been undertaken by other peoples to ensure their

“place in the sun.” Unhappily we can hardly doubt that this law of competition will survive the vast conflict which it has caused, and that even in time of peace there will still be harsh conflicts to sustain.

After the war Italy will be preoccupied in securing the advantages which she has obtained, increasing her resources, and extending her activities. To come to an understanding with her, to avoid disagreements, we must thoroughly understand her programme, must realise, for instance, that she hopes to exert an influence in the East similar to that which France has always exerted. We must also realise that she wishes “to become a great industrial country,” as the deputy Nitti recently wrote. He already sees Italy “excellently organised technically,” replacing Germany in many domains, and succeeding her in the world’s markets.

No doubt the community of arms will tighten the bonds between France and Italy. This war, waged against the same enemy, will bear lasting memories. But the nations do not live on memories. Neither do they live on sentiment. There is in Italy a very sincere desire to continue, after the war, the cordial relations which the war has established. However, if one questions the Italians, if one asks them how they envisage the future of their relations with France, they generally exhibit some reserve, because the bases of a future collaboration are not as yet very clear to them. But this state of mind is far more pleasing to us, and offers far more security, than the fragile enthusiasm and uncritical idealism which imperfectly conceal divergencies or con-

flicting interests, and which, as a rule, nourish nothing but a dangerous hypocrisy. The positive fact, the great advantage obtained, is that the struggle against the Germanic domination has created a necessity common to France and Italy, and has opened between them a new current of sympathy. These are the conditions most favourable to an enduring understanding ; the clairvoyance, realism, and political sense of our Governments will do the rest.

THE END

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